

## Chewing

Dogs are inquisitive and social animals; they need to do something, especially when they are left alone. Dogs chew as a natural and necessary behaviour. It helps to pass the time, relieve stress, burn energy, clean teeth and ease a teething puppy's gums. Some breeds are much more orally fixated due to genetic influences. Although chewing "problems" may occur in any breed, they are common in dogs bred to retrieve.



Puppies explore their world with their mouths just as human babies do. When a

new puppy comes home, they will bite on anything available. This is a good thing as this is how they learn to acquire bite inhibition later in life. To assist in this learning, allow the puppy ample play time with other healthy, friendly dogs and puppies.

Provide your puppy with appropriate toys to chew.

**Remember that chewing is a natural behaviour and punishing inappropriate chewing causes stress and may worsen destructive chewing!**

When you are away or can't keep an eye on your puppy, make sure to confine them in a crate or an x-pen and give them appropriate toys to chew, effectively eliminating any possibility of destructive chewing mistakes. By doing this, you are also creating a habit and teaching your puppy to actively look for appropriate toys when they want to chew. Eventually, you can make your puppy's play area and confinement space larger and larger until you trust them to make appropriate choices.

