

Destructive Behaviour

Dogs and puppies are playful and explorative by nature, so it is normal behaviour for them to nibble, dig, taste, play or even chew on objects when they explore their environment. Dogs and puppies should have a supply of appropriate items that they are able to chew on.

Some dogs may direct their chewing or digging in a way that results in destruction and it's important to figure out why this is happening so you are able to properly manage and reduce these behaviours. Below is a list of some reasons a dog may begin to be destructive:



- Anxiety when being left alone
- Not having enough appropriate items to chew on
- Not having an outlet to release energy
- Boredom

There are plenty of ways to reduce chewing and destructive behaviour, such as:

- Dog or puppy proofing your home. Put items that are valuable to you away or out of reach of your dog, like shoes, books, electronics and clothes. By placing these items in areas that the dog cannot reach, you are setting them up to succeed.
- Figuring out what toys your dog enjoys. Have a selection of different sizes, smells, shapes and textures.
- Supervising your dog when at home and making sure you are redirecting any unwanted chewing behaviour positively to appropriate items. If you are unable to supervise them, keep them in a confined area that is safe and dog proof.
- Providing your dog with indestructible toys or long-lasting edible chew toys. Rotate these items frequently to prevent boredom.
- Ensuring your dog gets enough mental or physical exercise. Otherwise, their pent-up energy may lead to destructive behaviour. Exercise your dog in a variety of ways, such as going on long walks and jogs or playing tug-o-war or catch. You can also put their meals in puzzle feeders or put treats in a food dispensing toy for added mental stimulation.

By providing dogs with proper outlets and appropriate items, you will reduce and help prevent destructive behaviour. Remember that we always use positive reinforcement and gently guide our dogs and puppies to items we want them to chew and away from those we don't. If the destructive behaviour still continues, you may need to contact a veterinarian to see if there's an underlying medical condition.

