

Stealing Items

Do you have a dog that loves to steal items and even play “keep away” or guard those valued objects? Management is the key.

Maybe your dog likes to chew your shoes or favourite sunglasses. Keeping your home “puppy proof” is the best way to combat this issue. Put any items your dog is inclined to steal in closets or anywhere that is out of their reach.

If your dog has a habit of taking inappropriate items when unsupervised, you need to implement confinement training, teaching them to be in a crate at times when you cannot monitor them. It’s important to remove the dog’s access to objects to prevent and eliminate the behaviour.

If your dog does use the “5 finger discount” and pilfers your stuff, don’t chase them, or they will play “keep away” and learn that this is super fun! Always trade up for stolen items, meaning offer something of higher value to encourage them to let go of their prize. Teach an appropriate “leave it” and “drop it” cue. (See THS’s info sheets [How to Teach Drop It](#) and [How to Teach Leave It.](#))

For a dog that shows a tendency to resource guard, seek professional help; never attempt to remove something from their mouth.

