

PUPPY BITING

Puppy biting is a completely normal behaviour and furthermore, it is an important skill for puppies to experiment with in order to learn bite inhibition.

The most valuable time for puppies to learn this is while they are with their mother and littermates. Research has shown that puppies that stay with their littermates until at least 10 weeks have fewer biting issues and grow up to have fewer socialization conflicts (fighting etc) as an adult.

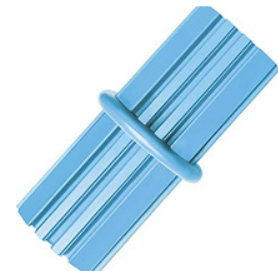
Common Reasons Puppies Bite

- Overtired
- Under exercised
- Overstimulated
- Communicating a need (potty break, hungry)
- Communicating a feeling (frustration, stress)
- Communicating a dislike (being held)
- Learning and exploring
- Instinctual
- Learned behaviour from playing with older/larger dogs
- Breed characteristic



Things To Avoid

- Waving, mouth play or playing with your hands in general
- Physical punishment
- Continued petting/playing when teeth are out
- Practicing taking your dogs food or placing your hand in their bowl *there are better techniques to prevent resource guarding
- Playing frequently with older/larger dogs who don't size accommodate
- Allowing unsupervised play with children



Recommended Toys

- Kong
- Kong Binkie
- Kong Puppy Teething Stick
- JW Hol-ee Roller
- JW Treat Pod
- JW Crackle Heads
- West Paw Quizel Treat Toy and many others from West Paw





PUPPY BITING

To curb puppy biting, we will be taking a multi pronged approach through **prevention** and **teaching**. In this section we will review prevention. If you encounter other biting/mouthing issues such as, with their food or toys or while being pet, speak with your instructor to receive additional help and guidance.

Prevention

Satisfy their needs

When your puppy begins to mouth, ask yourself have they had enough physical exercise? Have they had enough mental exercise? Have they had enough sleep or could they need a nap?

- **Social interactions:** Provide plenty of opportunities for your puppy to meet and play with puppies of similar age and size. Puppies will continue to learn bite inhibition from playing with their friends as they grow up. Play sessions should always be monitored and mediated by someone who understands dog body language and communication.
- **Physical exercise:** The amount of physical exercise your puppy needs depends on their age, breed and simply the uniqueness of your pup. A general guideline is 5 minutes per month of age, twice a day. So a 3 month old would need 15 minutes twice a day. Types of exercise can include, hiking, exploration walks, fetch, swimming and socializing.
- **Mental exercise:** Dog's love using their senses and problem solving skills. Provide your pup a variety of games and activities such as IQ games, snuffle mats, treat search muffin tin game and training.
- **Sleep:** Besides a good night's sleep, puppies need frequent rest breaks and naps. During sleep is when puppies retain all of the new experiences they had. Some puppies will be better than others at learning how to stop and rest while others will need scheduled naps. If your puppy needs a nap, place them in their crate or exercise pen in a dark room with a frozen kong. Licking helps calm dogs and will assist in putting them to bed.

Safe play

Your puppy doesn't yet know how to properly interact with people, we need to be patient and consistent to teach them proper play and bite inhibition with people.

- **Avoid the floor:** If your pup jumps and nips when you sit on the floor, start by sitting in a chair or low stool for play sessions and work up to being on the floor.
- **Appropriate toys:** When playing with your pup, select toys that are large enough for you both to share.
- **Appropriate play:** Play with your puppy similarly to how you would like them to play with children. Don't use your hands to push or slap their face and don't over power them causing them to need to escalate their play. Simply move the toy softly on the floor, play tug alternating winning and losing, toss the toy in the air or across the room.
- **Monitored play with kids:** Children like puppies, need guidance on proper play. Children can quickly escalate play with running, high pitch yelling and quick movements. Teach children to remain standing, how to play fetch and other safe games.



Did you know?:

Puppies go through a fear period between 7-9 weeks old.
Negative experiences at this time can become imprinted.