



Chew Toys

Most puppies and some adult dogs have a strong, natural desire to investigate and chew. But this desire can be a major problem if your puppy chews your new shoes!

Toys

When selecting chew toys, choose toys that are going to last and are interesting to the dog. Always remember to rotate your toys every few days to keep them interesting. Put a couple away for a few days and then when you get them back out again, the dog will find them very fun and exciting. They will think you are constantly bringing home new toys!

Some toys are designed so you can stuff food into the openings. This will increase your puppy's interest in the toys and will extend the amount of time they stay occupied. Listed below are a few of our "favorites".

Kong Toy: This is a must have for all puppies. It is a three tier rubber, hollow toy that is indestructible. Because of its unusual shape it has a great bounce that dogs love to chase. Also with the center of the toy being hollow, it allows you to wedge a biscuit in it or put a little bit of peanut butter or canned food in the center. This will keep most dogs busy for quite some time. Then when your dog is finished with it, you can wash it in the dishwasher. Our veterinarians carry "Blue Kong's" which have a substance present in it that makes the toys visible on x-rays if your dog should happen to swallow it whole (a rare occurrence).



Goodie Ball or Ship: This toy is similar to the Kong as it also is a toy that you can wedge a biscuit in the center holes. The goodie ball has one hole and the goodie ship has 3 holes to hold treats.

Indestructible Ball: This is an ideal toy for the "ball nut". It is as the name implies, an indestructible toy. The ball is 6" in diameter and dogs can never get their mouths around the ball to pick it up. This is what motivates the dog to keep playing. Most dogs do not give up easily and keep trying to pick up the ball, thus the game goes on.



Buster Cube: For the food motivated dog, this mentally challenging toy keeps your dog busy. It comes in both a round and dice shaped toy, both with several compartments in the middle to store the food. As the dog pushes the toy around with his/her nose or bats it with its feet, the dog is rewarded as a couple kibbles of food come out. The toy holds 1 1/2 cups of dry dog food, so you can literally feed your dog with the buster cube. Your dog will love using his/her head to figure this toy out.

Rawhides: These are one of the most common chew toys for dogs. You must choose a rawhide of appropriate size for your particular dog. When rawhide gets wet it is very soft. When it gets soft, it can be easily swallowed and dogs can choke on it. When rawhide gets small, throw them away and get a new one. Rawhides are not toys that last extremely long.



Pressed Rawhides and Bully Sticks:

These are both a type of rawhide that lasts longer than the traditional rawhide. For the rawhide lover, this is a better option.

Preventing Problems

Even with an excellent selection of appealing toys, your dog may still find your things more inviting to play with or chew on. Never give your puppy items to chew on that are similar to other household items that you do not want the puppy to chew on. Your puppy can not tell the difference between your old shoes and your new ones. Until your dog can be trusted, your dog must always be supervised while out in the house or confined to a safe area.

Separation Anxiety

Destructive behavior while you are away is often a direct response to anxiety. In most cases, the puppy is very closely bonded with you and becomes stressed when you leave. It is not the puppy's attempt to get even with you. Most separation anxiety occurs within the first 30 minutes of you leaving. To minimize this anxiety, always exercise your dog before you leave home. A tired puppy is less likely to become stressed. Providing toys that provide mental stimulation will help lessen the anxiety and keep your pet occupied during the time you are away. If you are having a problem with separation anxiety, confine him/her to a crate for their safety and the safety of your house.

Digging

Dogs dig for many different reasons. But digging commonly occurs when pets are left alone outside with insufficient mental stimulation. To help alleviate a digging problem, you must provide your dog with stimulating toys and increase his/her play and exercise time. For the natural digger, you might think about providing a digging area for your dog to use.

