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How to Stop a Puppy from Biting

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Posted by Chewy

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Puppies are cute and cuddly—and often also ready to bite. While getting acclimated with all the new sights, smells and textures the world has to offer, a puppy is constantly learning about his new environment. And biting offers him one way to taste the difference between, say, your finger, and his pet-approved chew toy.

When it comes to manners, a puppy has a lot to learn—especially when his natural instinct is to nip and chew. To a puppy, a playful hand can be just as appealing as a chew toy, and it is up to us to help curb



Why is my puppy biting?

Puppies become acclimated with new environments by sniffing and tasting. Similar to babies, a puppy becomes acquainted with various items by conducting a taste test and putting everything in his mouth. You might come home to find your puppy biting and chewing up your personal items, like a shoe or pillow, because they're easy targets. A puppy might also nibble and bite because his baby teeth are on their way out, and new ones are coming in. When a puppy chews up your hand or your stuff, he isn't trying to be malicious. He's just finding something—anything—that might relieve the pain of teething.

How to stop puppy biting:

A common misconception of this behavior is that it is commonly referred to as biting or nipping, when it's neither. "[The behavior] isn't intended to hurt or scare (or eat). The technical name is mouthing," says Anthony Newman, CPDT-KA, certified pet dog trainer in NYC. "When a dog uses her mouth like a hand to grab or tug, [it's] usually with the intention of playing (chase or tug)."

While you may want to curb this behavior, some soft mouthing should be allowed so your puppy can learn how to use their mouth in a gentle way. Your puppy is learning Acquired Bite Inhibition (ABI) and the bite inhibition they acquire during puppyhood will stay with them forever.

Make playtime productive. A puppy lives in a human-dominated world, and, at times, it's necessary to get on his level to communicate—literally! Interactive play with your new best friend is a great way to stimulate his mind, build a bond and set boundaries. The [JW Pet Play Place Butterfly Puppy Teether](#) is a durable toy and useful tool to use when figuring out how to stop puppy biting.

When playing with your pup, it's important to have fun and get to know your furry friend, so that he can understand the mutual relationship. If your puppy nips, or begins eyeing your hand as a chew toy, it's encouraged to let out a sudden, short yelp, similar to a high-pitched bark. This lets him know that he has bitten down too hard.

Provide alternatives. Providing a young dog with better alternatives allows him to chew, but also helps curb undesired behavior, which is critical in early training. "As soon as his teeth disengage, immediately redirect [his attention] to a fun, squeaky toy, rope tug, ball or whatever his favorite is," says Anthony. The [Nylabone DuraChew Dental Chew Dinosaur Dog Toy](#) is a tasty, chicken-flavored toy that aids with dental hygiene and is a perfect alternative to your furniture and clothing. To encourage new, positive behaviors, it's important to provide your pooch with plenty of appealing alternatives. For any teething pup, the [KONG Puppy Dog Toy](#) offers a strong, rubber surface that can stand up to hours of nipping and play. Its hollow



By giving your pup a proper item to chew on—especially one that doubles as a tasty reward—he will soon catch on that good behavior certainly pays off.

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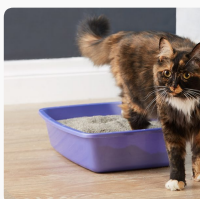


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