



**UNLEASH
YOUR DOG'S
INNER
LEGEND**



WHAT TO DO WITH DOGS THAT CHEW

It's an all too familiar scenario. Your brand-new Persian rug in tatters, missing shoes found mutilated beyond repair, couches frayed and food items half-eaten and strewn about the kitchen. The culprit behind this carnage? Your loving, cute and adorable furry ball of...destruction.

We asked our resident reporter hound, Superdog to ask the expert for some advice on your dog's enthusiastic chewing habits.



Superdog: Doc, I have to be honest. I know it upsets my owner, but I can't help it...chewing just feels so good! It's how I play and learn about my environment.

Expert: Yes, Superdog, chewing is a natural instinct for dogs. It helps them relieve stress, it keeps them mentally and physically challenged and keeps their teeth healthy. However, excessive and destructive chewing can also be indicative of other behavioural issues.

Superdog: I've been chewing ever since I can remember... well, since I got my teeth!

Expert: The most well-known reason that puppies chew is teething. Puppies' milk teeth appear at 3 weeks and start making way for permanent teeth from about 8 weeks to 7 months. During this phase, their gums and teeth will irritate them. Chewing any object they can get their paws on helps relieve that irritation.

Superdog: What is your advice doc?

Expert: Buy your pooch some chew toys from your local pet store or supermarket. If you don't want to spend money, consider making your own chew toys and food puzzles by filling cardboard boxes with dog treats so that they can chew on it for hours. Toilet rolls and sand in an old sock also work well.

Superdog: What are some of the other reasons dogs chew?

Expert: Well Superdog, why don't you tell us?

Superdog: Uh...well sometimes when I feel bored, chewing is my way of trying to get attention.

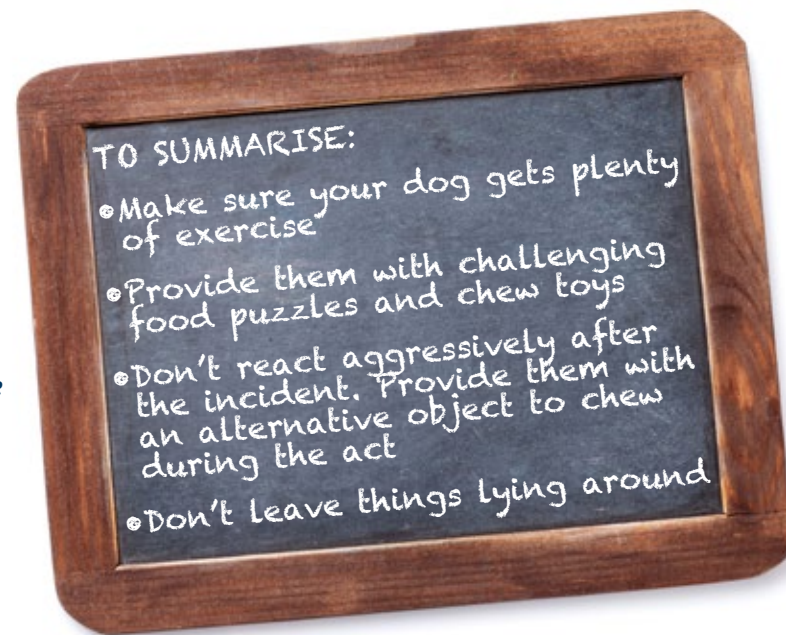
Expert: Yes Superdog, boredom plays a big role in chewing. That's why it is incredibly important to make sure that your dog gets ample exercise. Take your dog for playdates with other dogs if they are your only pet. Lastly, make sure they are mentally and physically challenged with games or food puzzles.

Superdog: You've given me much to chew on doc! We haven't mentioned another primary reason for chewing...that dreaded moment your owner decides to leave you all alone in a big, empty house.

Expert: Dogs do get separation anxiety and that can lead to destructive gnawing. Luckily there are ways to combat that. Rules like 'no touch, no talk, no eye contact', before leaving the house helps communicate to your dog that it is fine that you are leaving. It is imperative that you do not appear anxious when you're leaving.

Superdog: Just keep calm and your pup will follow suit!

Expert: Exactly! Finally, remember that scolding your dog hours or even minutes after the incident does not help at all. Dogs have short memories and will become confused. It's best to discipline your dog while they are in the act of chewing. Replace what they are chewing or distract them with a chew toy. Dogs also learn through conditioning. If they associate leaving an object with a reward and a simple command like 'Leave', they will learn to be obedient over time.



TO SUMMARISE:

- Make sure your dog gets plenty of exercise
- Provide them with challenging food puzzles and chew toys
- Don't react aggressively after the incident. Provide them with an alternative object to chew during the act
- Don't Leave things lying around

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