



WHY DOES MY PUPPY

BITE?

Firstly, puppy biting is normal, and an essential part of their development. When puppies bite, they are learning how much pressure they can apply to living and non-living things. Your puppy should learn that he can apply as much pressure as he wants on an object like a toy, but not on living things. Play biting is the way he learns to inhibit the force of his bites. The puppy receives essential feedback *before* it develops strong jaws that could inflict serious damage.

Puppy biting must eventually be eliminated - but not all at once. Ideally, the dog should be taught not to hurt people before it is 3 months old and certainly before the age of 20 weeks - when he would lose his puppy teeth and his jaw muscles would be fully developed, therefore the bite more powerful!

You should start as you mean to go on and request that all members of the family, and friends, do not encourage your puppy to bite. It's a good idea not to get in the habit of playing rough and tumble with your puppy/dog, or let him pull on clothing, hands or hair. He will then think its ok to do these things, and you will inevitably experience problems as a result.

So what can you do?

No Painful Bites.

We need to let the puppy know when biting hurts, without resorting to physical punishment or restraint, which can makes matters worse. A simple OUCH! or SQUEAL is usually sufficient. The volume will depend on the pup's character. If this makes the pup more excited completely ignore your pup.

1. When your dog bites you or your clothing, squeal, say ouch! or hey! in a distinctive voice - not a bellowing one!
2. You must then stop play temporarily to enable the puppy to calm down before continuing to interact with him. When he bites again, continue repeating this exercise.
3. The biting will not stop immediately so don't worry that it's not working! You must be black and white about this. Any puppy teeth on flesh is not tolerated

at all, if you sometimes let your puppy mouth you 'because he didn't mean it' he will become confused and continue to nip.

Getting to know your pup.

Can you identify any pattern in the biting such as the time of day, specific people, is it before lunchtime? Quite often pups will have 'mad moment' for the following reasons and it is important to consider all of these when you sense trouble!

1. Is your pup simply over excited to see you? Greet your pup with a toy to transfer the focus on to.
2. Does your pup need the toilet? Take your pup outside.
3. Is your pup hungry? Feed your pup.
4. Has your puppy had enough sleep? Some pups can sleep for 15 hours a day. If they are over tired they can become silly and nippy. Put him to bed for some calm time.
5. Are any of the humans 'winding' the puppy up by playing with hands or rough and tumble. We are huge to a pup and if they do become frightened they might use their teeth to try to get us off. Discourage all friends and family from encouraging the use of hands in play. Instead direct the pup onto something else such as a soft toy, ragga or old sock.

You must take responsibility for identifying what it is that triggers the biting and try to prevent these events occurring as they give the puppy an opportunity to practice the behavior. And practice makes perfect!

Not Working?

- 1) Some dogs' may get worse when you yelp! Just go quiet and stay still, looking away from your puppy.

Provide plenty of chew toys for exercising jaws.

NEVER physically scold your puppy for biting. If your puppy starts to perceive your hands as a threat they will use their teeth to try to increase the distance between them and the hands. The only way they have to do this is using their teeth.

Keep this information sheet (and others) for reference. It is not possible to give advice to suit every owner's experience or problems. Always ask if you have any questions with this, or any other behavioural issues.