

# Puppy Biting!



Puppies explore their new world with their best sensory tool - their mouth! They bite and nip to learn how things feel, taste, and move in reaction. It is normal for a puppy to be extremely nippy between 9 and 16 weeks of age and then again from 4.5 months-5.5 months while they lose their puppy teeth.

Puppy “mouthing” also serves a secondary purpose- it teaches a puppy how to inhibit the force of its bites. When a puppy bites another puppy too hard, the hurt puppy will cry out and move away. This teaches the biting puppy that he has bitten too hard and should be careful with the force of his bite, lest he should lose his playmate.

## How can I teach my dog not to bite?

**More exercise!** Growing pups have growing exercise demands. Take your pup out for ½ hr or more. Try exercising them on a longer leash with a toy.

**Cry “ouch” and leave the room.** This is how dogs teach each other, so you need to employ this strategy. To do this, you need to be able to ‘escape’ from your puppy by leaving through a door or hopping over a baby gate.

**Redirect biting onto other toys.** I use this one the most, especially with young kids. Get a big stuffy and encourage them to bite the correct thing.

**Teach OFF and SIT.** Invaluable. Use lots of treats for any kind of obedience . I like to have a little bowl nearby so I always have treats handy.



**Use a bitter-tasting spray.** Be careful with this as you don’t want any spray in your mouth too. Bitter tasting spray is good for applying to your pants or sleeves, but not hands. Its not good to use with kids.

**Biting your pant legs.** Employ the same strategies as above. Leave the room, redirect onto a correct toy, or use a spray. For obedience training, teach your dog to walk nicely beside you for a treat. This works very effectively.

