

Home



# PREVENTING PUPPY PROBLEMS

Don't be fooled by that cute little face. Yes, puppies are adorable, but they can also do some serious damage to your home. Whether it's chewing on your furniture or urinating on the carpet, puppies can be problematic. Good thing there's a silver lining! Even the most severe behavior problems can be prevented in puppyhood. Yep, you can help your playful pup become a courteous companion.

Puppies aren't perfect. In fact, it's their natural instincts that get them into trouble. Motivated by their basic need for food, water, sleep and elimination, puppies will do almost anything to attain their goals. This could be anything from chewing on your shoes to excessive barking. I mean, that gets your attention, doesn't it? To correct certain behaviors, you need to establish some "house rules" through cause-and-effect experiences. In time, your pup will learn how to properly behave.

### The Chewing Conundrum

When puppies explore new environments, they come to rely on their senses. By using their mouth, they are able to familiarize themselves with their surroundings by licking, biting and chewing on unfamiliar objects. And this inherent need to chew only worsens when their permanent teeth start coming in. There's good news though! By being proactive and providing some teething solutions, you can ease your pet's jaw pain while keeping your house intact.

#### Puppy Proof

If your cute canine takes a particular interest in your slippers or eyes up your wicker laundry basket, you should keep them away from your pet. Since dogs are scent-based, they tend to chew on items that smell like you and the rest of your family. That's why you should walk through your house and remove small objects that'll tempt your puppy to chew. Fringed rugs, throw pillows and blankets should be stowed away, while long-leafed houseplants, clothes and shoes should be placed just out of your pet's reach.

#### Teething Toys

Indulge your puppy's instinct to chew with toys that they can actually sink their teeth into. [Rubber snack toys](#), [multi-textured toys](#), and [rope toys](#) are all great options. Plus, if you soak any of these toys in water and put them in the freezer for a few hours, they'll soothe your pet's sore gums.

#### DIY Deterrent

For bigger items that can't be hidden away (like your dining room table), try a DIY deterrent spray. All you have to do is combine two parts [apple cider vinegar](#) with one part [white vinegar](#) in a [spray bottle](#). Then, shake and apply to your furniture with a light spritz. This spray will protect your furnishings with its distinct smell and bitter taste, which dogs detest.

### Potty-Training Pointers

Since most puppies don't have full control of their bowel movements during their first six months, accidents will happen. If your puppy continually "goes" in a specific location in your house, the solution is simple! Create a makeshift bathroom with a [puppy pad holder](#) and a [training pad](#), and place it on their elimination spot. But not all of us are that lucky. With some patience, commitment and lots of consistency, you can potty-train your pet by following these basic guidelines.

#### Know the Telltale Signs

When your puppy needs to go to the bathroom, they'll let you know through subtle changes in their behavior. Whining, pacing, circling, sniffing and general agitation are all telltale signs that your dog needs to go ... like right now! As you begin potty-training, keep an eye out for these particular behaviors to prevent accidents indoors.

#### Create a Schedule

A day-to-day schedule will teach your dog when to eat, sleep, play and do their business. Because puppies can only control their bladder for an hour or two, you'll want to plan a bathroom break every two hours. By sticking to this strict schedule, you'll actually be able to predict when your furbaby needs their next potty break.

#### Ring the Bell

Still not sure if your puppy needs to go out? Then, hang a [training bell](#) on the handle of your entry door. Ring the bell every time you take your puppy outside to eliminate. Over time, your dog will learn that the bell is a signal for "bathroom." They will even hit it themselves to let you know when they need to go outside.