



Problem Behaviour

Chewing is a normal behaviour for dogs. While most dogs will grow out of destructive chewing, it can develop into a real problem when your belongings are damaged or completely destroyed.

POSSIBLE CAUSES

- Inquisitive exploration – mouths are the most sensitive part of a puppy, so they learn the most about something by putting it in their mouth.
- Teething - chewing helps their little teeth break through the gums and relieves the pain.
- Bored or lack of exercise
- Medical conditions - especially if they are swallowing the items
- Aggressive territorial behavior directed at doors, windows, fences or gates
- Separation anxiety – destruction only occurs when separated from the owner
- Fear of noises or thunderstorm – destruction only occurs when noise or thunderstorm is present

TREATMENT

The type of treatment depends on the cause:

- If there is no anxiety or fear, treatment is often successful:
 - Increase the amount of daily exercise and walks
 - Regularly give them new toys. Food oriented toys are often the best
 - Keep them in a supervised environment
 - Spray objects with commercially available bitter tasting products
- If your dog is anxious, treatment can be more complex:
 - Do not punish, as it will make it worse
 - Do not leave them alone if destruction occurs when you're away
 - Avoid noises and be alert to thunderstorms, firework displays etc.
- See your veterinarian or animal behaviorist

