



Puppy Biting, Nipping and General Unruliness

Puppies are equipped with more than 25 razor sharp teeth that seem to be all over everything they encounter, including your skin. This is completely normal as puppies learn about the world around them. However, it is crucial that your puppy learn good bite inhibition at this young age. The following tips will help you navigate this stage of development.

Teach your puppy that biting means the fun ends.

- If your puppy bites or nips you while playing, a quick, high-pitched “ow!” followed by removing yourself from play for 30-60 seconds, will quickly let them know that biting means game over. It is important to be consistent with this approach. For most puppies attention is a great motivator, so use it to your advantage.

Encourage play that is noncontact such as “fetch” and “tug.”

- It is easy for puppies to get over-excited when hands and arms are moving quickly around them. Encouraging play with a toy allows for a fun game without the temptation to view you as the toy!

Provide plenty of new and interesting toys and chew bones for your puppy to explore.

- Rotating toys out, offering toys that dispense treats, and starting mentally enriching activities early will greatly help with your puppies nipping.

Enroll in a puppy class!

- Getting your puppy in a puppy class is one of the best ways to ensure proper socialization. They will be playing with other puppies, meeting “strangers,” and learning the foundations for basic obedience.

Stick to a schedule

- A consistent schedule of play time, quiet time, and nap time will help your puppy learn what to expect. As they get a little older, you will have already set them up to succeed with your family’s schedule!

Time Out!

- If your puppy seems to be throwing a tantrum or is unable to calm down during interaction, it is acceptable to offer a time out. Calmly place your puppy in their crate and offer them something safe to chew. Allow them time to calm down and let them try the situation again. It is important to remain calm and not use this as a form of punishment. It is simply offering them an alternative

to their outburst. (Many times younger puppies will fall asleep during time out, and were likely just over-tired.)

Puppy biting can be a challenging behavior, but know that with a little hard work, it won't last forever! Physical punishment for nipping or biting can cause lasting repercussions and is not recommended at any time. Physical punishment will often cause your puppy to become afraid of you, or worse, the behavior may escalate into aggression.

If, after trying these suggestions, you are still experiencing undesirable behaviors in your dog, SUBMIT QUESTIONS by clicking the link under Ask A Trainer on the Behavior and Training page of the Wayside Waifs website: www.waysidewaifs.org.

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