



During teething, it's normal for your adorable puppy to bite and chew everything.

This doesn't have to interfere with your bonding time, though. In fact, this is the perfect opportunity to help your pup learn what to chew, and what's off-limits.

Read on to learn more, and to make teething easier on both you and your puppy...

Puppy Teething Tips: Less Biting—More Bonding, Learning, and Fun

Teething is a natural process for puppies, just like it is for human beings. But, the accompanying nipping and chewing behaviors may feel like a challenge.

Remember, they're still learning—right now, they don't know any better.

Fortunately, it's possible to teach them, and to have fun while they're learning.

With a few tips, you can make the experience more comfortable for both of you—plus, prevent your favorite shoes from turning into puppy chew toys!

The Teething Process

Puppies get their baby teeth around 2-4 weeks of age. Then, soon after you adopt them (around 3-4 months old), they start losing their baby teeth.

Adult teeth come in to replace those baby teeth, and this teething process usually lasts 1-3 months.

During this time, pups can experience pain as the new teeth erupt into place. Chewing helps your puppy stay more comfortable.

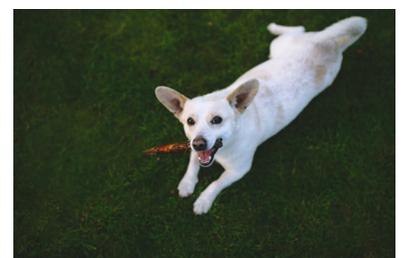
Add to this the fact that puppies—who don't have thumbs like we do—use their mouths to explore the world and to pick up toys and food, and it's understandable that they're prone to putting everything in their mouths during this time.

Here are some ways to ensure safer chewing and healthier teething habits...

Plan Ahead For Success

You'll want to start with tactical planning—that is, limit access to anything that you don't want your puppy to chew.

Use their crate or playpen—or keep them in a small, puppy-proofed room—when you can't supervise them directly.



That limits access to things that could be bad for them (for example, medicine bottles and cleaning products) and it helps protect your shoes, furniture legs, TV remote, and anything else you don't want chewed up.

To be extra cautious, it's a good idea to go one step further...

For any objects you don't want turned into puppy chew toys—especially shoes, socks, purses, charging cords, etc.—be sure to keep them in locked cabinets or high up and out of your curious pup's reach.

Offer a Fun Alternative

Is your adorable puppy disappointed they can't chew up your hat or your antique chair leg?

Don't worry—you've got something way better to offer them!

Remember, chewing is a necessity that keeps your puppy comfortable during teething—so, offer them a variety of puppy-safe chew toys.

Hard plastic or nylon toys—especially ones designed for teething—are a good bet. Bonus points if you can pop them into the freezer before you give them to your puppy, so your pup can benefit from the soothing effects of a cold toy on their gums.

Ice cubes and frozen baby carrots are good options, too. And, a rope toy for tug-of-war allows your puppy to really sink their teeth in and have fun.

All these toys are great—just remember to check them frequently to be sure your puppy isn't chewing off pieces that could be swallowed or choked on. When in doubt with a particular toy, supervised playtime is best.

Also, be sure to get teething toys designed for dogs, not for human babies. Human toys don't hold up well to sharp puppy teeth!

Be Your Puppy's Teacher

Teach behaviors you WANT to see, rather than focusing on what you don't want.

Now that you have plenty of toys available, train your puppy to play with those rather than nipping at hands or feet.

If they do bite during play (puppies don't realize how sharp their tiny teeth are!), gently and calmly pull your hands or feet away, and offer a toy instead.

You can even make a quick "yelp" or "ouch" noise when they nip, so they make the association that their biting behavior is uncomfortable for their human friend.

If they don't want to switch to the toy and keep trying to nip your fingers, gently place your puppy in a playpen or crate for a short break.

Then, offer praise and bring them out for more playtime or cuddles when they are sitting calmly.

Your pup is smart—but they need your help learning the rules of your home.

If you're consistent, your pup is sure to pick up on your cues. And, they'll have a variety of puppy-appropriate toys to keep them entertained and soothed during their teething time.

