

Homeward Bound Golden Retriever Rescue

Golden Rule Training



Destructive Chewing

Puppies need to chew; it is a natural behavior especially as they are teething. As they grow up they still have a need to chew. The trick is to teach the puppy early on it can chew, but only on appropriate/safe toys (puppy Kong's for example) and its owner is not a human chew toy. Dog mouthing or nipping on human skin is never acceptable. The important thing to remember is that dogs can get into other items and be destructive if not given appropriate toys to fulfill the need to chew.

The best way to curb the behavior is to replace the inappropriate items your dog is chewing with a safe/puppy proof toy or chew bone.

Action: If the puppy persists chewing on inappropriate items, the owner can try the spray deterrents (such as Bitter Apple) on the items he does not want chewed.

Action: A crate could help prevent destructive chewing, giving the dog a special chew toy while crated. Do not use the crate as punishment, the dog will resist going into it on its own. Make sure there is a special chew toy it only gets when it is crated. Make it a pleasant experience.

In some cases destructive chewing can be due to separation anxiety. If that is the case do not make a big deal out of coming home or leaving the house so the dog does not see this as a huge event (see recommendations for separation anxiety).

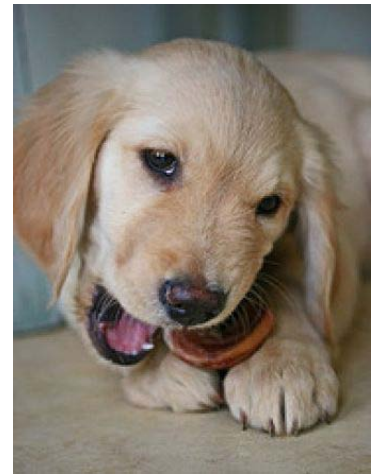
Basic obedience training can be helpful; the puppy can learn what its owner wants and what is expected of it. The more leadership exercises used with the puppy, the more the dog knows what behavior is wanted.

Puppies as well as dogs need exercise and they could be chewing out of boredom; teaching them not to chew and what appropriate play is will help. Appropriate play refers to not "wrestling" with the puppy or dog; rough play shows the dog it's okay to use its mouth as it would wrestling with its siblings or other dogs (the only time they can use mouthing and nipping).

Appropriate chew toys and treats:

Kong's® with peanut butter – don't fill the Kong's® all the way up, just a few tablespoons. If you freeze the Kong®, it is good for teething and it takes them longer to work through the peanut butter.

Nylabones ® - These are flavored rubber bones, they do not splinter.



Kong's and Nylabones can be safely given to a dog while in a crate.

There are various teething products in pet supply stores, but be careful to watch your puppy while chewing these.

Roasted bones and raw bones (cow) can be given, but watch these as they can splinter off as well. Let them chew on them, and then take them away (raw bones should be wrapped up and refrigerated for later use).

Rawhides and pressed bones: Some dogs really like these, but they can cause stomach upset. Again, do not give them these to chew on unless they are supervised.

Never put an unsafe toy in the crate with your dog and leave. It can choke on strings and squeaky toys, and bones can splinter off and lodge in its throats.