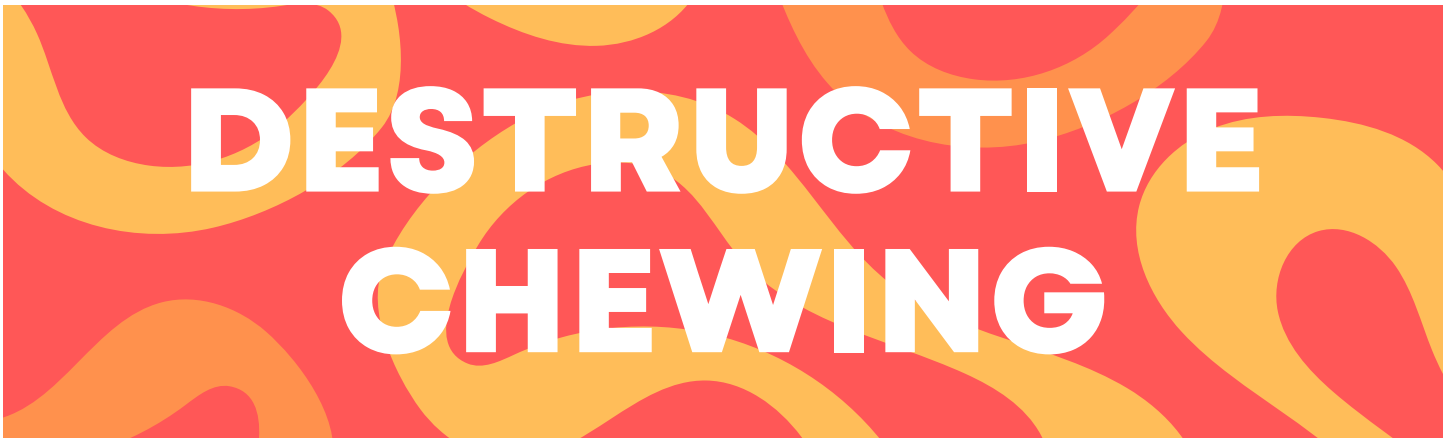

Puppy Teething

Puppies chew to explore their surroundings and to relieve teething discomfort. This chewing phase typically ends by 6 months of age. To help soothe your puppy, provide:

- **Ice cubes**
- **Frozen dog toys**
- **Puppy-safe chew toys/Nylabone**

Training your puppy to chew appropriate objects, like toys, will set the foundation for good chewing habits. **Be sure to supervise your puppy to prevent dangerous circumstances.**

Normal Chewing Behavior in Adult Dogs

Chewing is a natural behavior for dogs. It keeps their jaws strong and teeth clean. Dogs chew for fun, stimulation, and to relieve anxiety. Providing appropriate chew toys is crucial, but dogs also need to learn what is acceptable to chew. Training should be gentle and consistent.

Useful Tips to Prevent Destructive Chewing

1. Dog-Proof Your Home

- Store valuable items out of reach.
- Keep shoes and clothes in closed closets.
- Put dirty laundry in a hamper.
- Keep books and other chewable items on shelves.

2. Provide Plenty of Chew Toys

- Observe which toys your dog enjoys and offer those regularly.
- Rotate a few toys every few days to prevent boredom.
- Only give natural bones made for dogs. Avoid cooked or weight-bearing bones as they can splinter.
- If unsure about safe options, consult a veterinarian.

3. Offer Edible Chews

- Bully sticks, turkey necks, and beef cheek rolls can be good options.

- Supervise your dog to prevent choking.
- Avoid feeding chews in a competitive environment with other dogs.

4. Supervise and Redirect

- Monitor your dog and redirect chewing to appropriate items.
- Trade your dog for a more high-value item if you must take something dangerous from them. Toss a treat off to the side away from the dog. In most cases, she will drop what she has and go for the tasty snack.
- If your dog may react aggressively when an item is removed, seek professional training assistance.

5. Manage Unsupervised Time

- Use a crate when unsupervised.
- Ensure the crate is free of inappropriate chewable items.
- Provide ample exercise and interaction when your dog is not confined.
- Keep your dog on a leash in the home until she can be trusted at liberty.

8. Provide Exercise and Mental Stimulation

- Walks and games like fetch or tug help express your dog's desire for activity.
- Training, social outings, and dog sports provide mental enrichment.

Addressing Stress and Frustration-Related Chewing

Some dogs chew when stressed, frustrated, or bored. Common triggers include:

- Being confined near another animal they dislike
- Being teased or overstimulated
- Seeing an animal they want to chase but being unable to
- Watching other dogs play and wanting to join

To prevent frustration-related chewing:

- Provide a chew toy or tug toy in high-stimulation situations.
- Make sure your dog is physically and emotionally fulfilled.

What NOT to Do

- Do not scold or punish your dog after the fact. They won't understand why they are being punished.
- Do not use duct tape or any other item to close your dog's mouth. This is inhumane and dangerous.
- Do not tie a chewed object to your dog. This is ineffective and cruel.
- Do not crate your dog for extended periods as punishment to prevent chewing. Instead, use the crate when you cannot supervise.

With patience, consistency, and proper training, your dog can learn appropriate chewing habits, keeping both your belongings and their well-being intact.