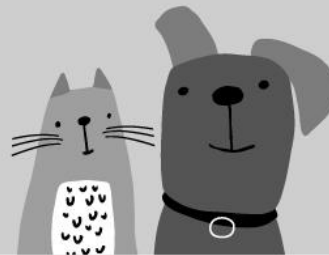


# Destructive Tendencies



## AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'!

The most common cause for nuisance behaviors in dogs is boredom.  
Dogs are social creatures and crave attention and affirmation.



Ignoring a dog for long stretches at a time and then reprimanding him for seeking attention is counterproductive. Reprimands are a form of attention. Behaviors that earn the dog attention will increase in frequency. Reprimands only confuse the dog.

1. **KEEP YOUR DOG BUSY: GIVE HIM SOMETHING TO DO.**
2. **WHEN YOU TAKE BREAKS, (PLEASE) DON'T FORGET TO PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR DOG.**
3. **TEACH/REWARD YOUR DOG TO RELAX ON HIS BED.**
4. **GIVE YOUR DOG EXERCISE, PLAY AND MENTAL STIMULATION EVERY DAY.**



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Destructive tendencies are one of the most common frustrations of dog owners, especially when the dog is very young. Below are some common reasons why a dog might be chewing items in your household, destroying any walls or furniture, or even digging holes in the backyard.

- **Teething and normal puppy development:** It is common for younger dogs to chew on things that are in a household. There are two reasons for this behavior in puppies. Firstly, dogs explore their environment with their mouths like humans do with their hands. Puppies can be really curious about a lot of items we keep in our house and that's how they learn more about it. Secondly, dogs under (approximately) 6 months of age go through a teething process. Teething can be uncomfortable or even painful, and just like with human babies, chewing on items can really help with pain relief for our pups. To decrease inappropriate chewing in puppies, it is important to provide them with appropriate items (toys, kongs, bones, etc) for them to chew. If your pup's chewing feels unmanageable, then a visit to your veterinarian help your dog during the teething process.
- **Anxiety:** This is the most common trigger for destructive tendencies in dogs. Destructive tendencies can be mitigated if the source of your dog's anxiety can be identified and addressed. If your dog is destructive when left alone, visit this [link](#) to learn more about separation-related anxiety. If your dog is experiencing too many new things at once (such as a move into a new home, addition or loss of family members, change in routine). Follow this [link](#) to learn more about trigger stacking. Other sources of anxiety in dogs include; genetics, trauma, positive punishment techniques, and under-socialization.
- **Boredom:** Destructive tendencies in dogs can occur because they lack appropriate outlets for their mental energy. It's easy to think that if we exercise our dog, that they should be fulfilled or tired enough to not want to chew our household items. However, it's crucial to make sure our dogs are having enough mental stimulation through engaging enrichment. To explore more ways of providing enrichment to keep your pup's brain active and happy, follow this [link](#).
- **Medical Issues:** It's important to discuss concerning behaviors with your veterinarian. There are many times where destructive tendencies or inappropriate chewing is an indication that an underlying medical issue is occurring. If a medical issue is occurring, destructive tendencies are very unlikely to subside with training and/or management until the medical issue is treated. Please consult your veterinarian to ensure there are no medical issues that are affecting your dog's behaviors.