

Mouthing, Chewing & Biting

An Overview

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The Plea

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HELP! My puppy's biting me!
He always wants to Chew.
He's eaten all my underwear
and almost every shoe!



How do I stop this shredding?
He's destroyed my house and home.
And what about the barking?
I Can't leave him alone!



He is a hyper maniac,
He'll bounce off me to you.
And now he is off Chasing squirrels,
His name forgotten too...

My yard is landscaped like the moon
All for the sake of bones!
Please hurry! I must end this call,
Before he eats the phone!

Oh, please, please offer some advice
And tell me what to do...
*How does an owner stop a dog,
From doing what dogs do?????*



MOUTHING:

This is predominantly a puppy behavior that's often attention seeking in nature.

It's how puppies learn about bite pressure! Their teeth are very sharp and they learn that teeth can hurt! They often mouth each other to initiate play. While normal, we don't want to encourage this behavior.

Adult dogs who put their mouth on you have learned that this is acceptable behavior - it's **NOT OKAY!**



Puppies Mouth Each Other

Mouthing turns into biting as play arousal increases!



Play is a means to practice aggressive behaviors without hurting each other!

What to do? Shout - HEY or OFF in a gruff voice (not a high pitched squeaky OUCH)!

**Remove yourself from the puppy.
Come back with appropriate chew toys. If your pup continues to bite, end the game. When all else fails, give your puppy a time out.**

Why do dogs chew? It's what they do!



CHEWING:

A behavior often exhibited by unsupervised:

- teething puppies
- bored adolescents
- anxious adults



CHEWING



Boredom



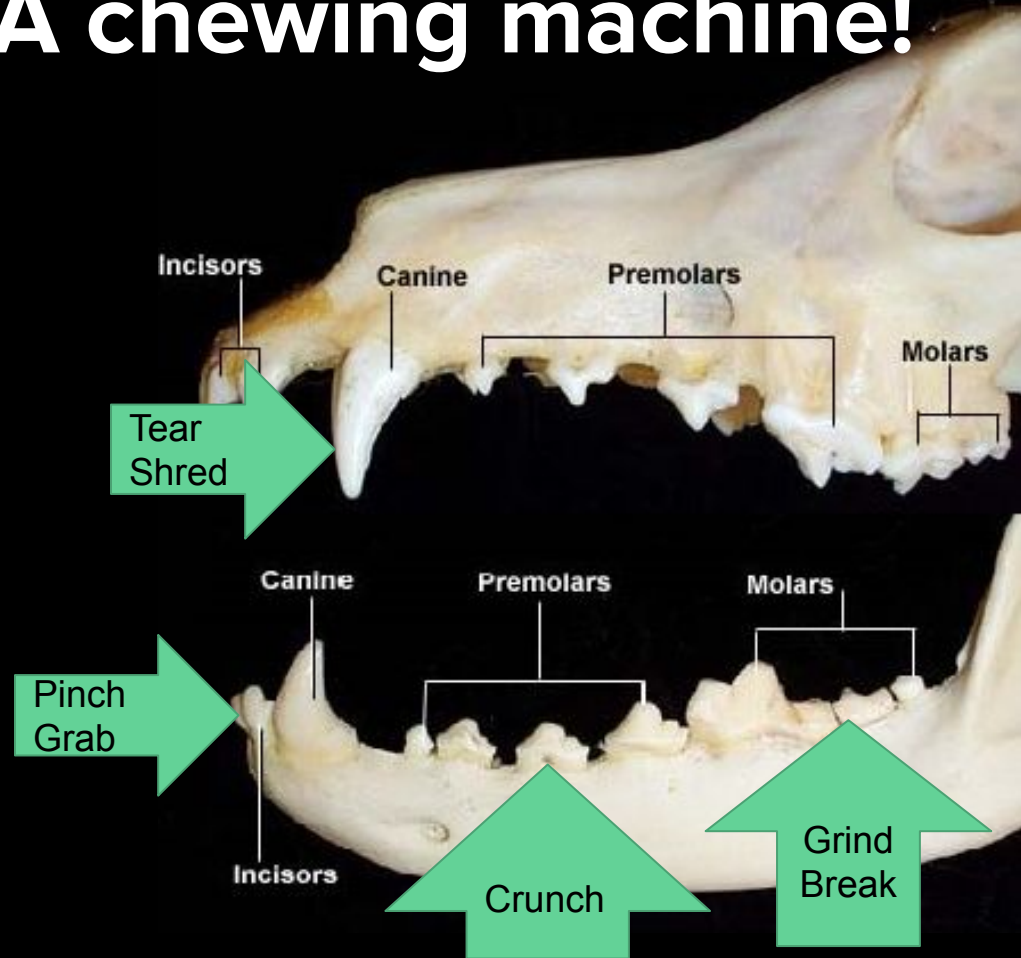
Anxiety



Teething

The dog's mouth: A chewing machine!

- Teeth and jaws are growing.
- Curved canine teeth are designed to shred and tear muscle; molars grind and break bones!



Supervise, Redirect & Provide Appropriate Chew Items



Food toys and puzzle games keep mouths busy - especially for teething puppies, bored adolescents and anxious adults!



BITING:

An aggressive dog is one that is ready to attack. (This dog will bite.)

A reactive dog is one that is responding to stimulus and not likely to attack.

A large number of reactive dogs are actually friendly when specific triggers are removed from the equation. ~Dr. Ian Dunbar





Why dogs bite:

- Genetics
- Resource guarding
- Fear
- Territorial
- Predatory
- Not properly socialized

This is NOT a training issue. If not addressed when the dog is young, this becomes a lifetime of management.