

Puppy Biting



For puppies 6 to 12 weeks:

The Socialisation Period At this stage, puppies are like little sponges—absorbing experiences and learning how to interact with the world. Their biting and mouthing behaviour is developmentally normal and essential for learning bite inhibition, social boundaries, and communication.

Why Are They So Bitey?

1. Teething discomfort
2. Exploration
 - Puppies use their mouths like toddlers use their hands.
3. Social learning
 - They bite each other during play to test boundaries.
4. Overstimulation or fatigue
5. Lack of structured interaction or enrichment



Key Principles of Force-Free Puppy Handling

1. No intimidation, pain, or physical correction (no scuffing, muzzle holding, yelling)
2. Reinforce calm behaviour instead of punishing unwanted behaviour
3. Redirect rather than reprimand
4. Prevent unwanted behaviour through smart environment management
5. Support natural development and emotional regulation

GOAL - Teach “soft mouth” not “don’t bite at all” Biting is apart of social learning.

How to STOP puppy biting!

Step 1 - Manage the Environment

- Provide plenty enrichment, toys and adequate rest

Step 2 - Expect and Teach Bite Inhibition

- Bite inhibition is not taught through punishment, but through feedback and redirection
- When puppy bite a littermate too hard, play stops.

Step 3 - Redirect Mouthing to Appropriate Outlet

- Replace your hand with a toy, teething ring, or tug

Step 4 - Create Predictable Routines

- Structured daily routines reduces over-arousal and general anxiety

Step 5 - Use Calm and Confident Handling

- Approach calmly, hold pups securely, let them come to you when ready

Step 6 - Regulate Energy Levels

- Use calming enrichment like licki mats or scatter feeding

Step 7 - Socialise your puppy

- With different environments and other puppies of their age