



HOW-TO

# Say Farewell To Puppy Biting



**F**irst things first, there's no quick cure for puppy biting. But if you're consistent with your messages and, at the same time, teach your pup what to do instead of nipping or biting, your little friend will stop this inappropriate behaviour, well, as soon as his or her personality allows.



There are various reasons why your puppy nips or bites:

- Puppies use their mouth to explore and interact with their surroundings.
- They play bite or nip out of frustration, over-arousal or fatigue.
- Teething/ sore gums can be the reason behind a puppy bite or it can be a defensive or offensive reaction (more often it's a defensive one!).

Preventing biting during play: have a toy in each hand when you play with your puppy and keep the play sessions short and relatively calm (2 – 3 minutes) to prevent your puppy from getting overly excited. Give him/ her something else to do during your frequent play breaks, i.e. chewing on a stuffed Kong® toy. If s/he does manage to nip you (accidentally or not), play should immediately stop – remove your hands, get up and turn away to ignore your pup for a few seconds (no telling off, no eye contact!). Once s/he's calmed down again, redirect your pup's need to bite to a toy again.

Manage and pre-empt: if your puppy gets difficult to manage for a while, only play inside her/ his play pen or gated off room. This means that you can quickly

step outside if s/he needs to cool off for a bit.

Most puppies initially don't like being handled and therefore give us a nip to tell us to 'get off' when we reach for them or try to pick them up. Pre-empt this behaviour and get your friend used to being handled; slowly reaching for your pup and rewarding calmness with a tasty treat will build a positive association with being handled.

Also, scale back on too much petting and hugging and give your pup the chance to ask for more.

Soothing sore gums: your pup's second teeth are pushing through until about week 22. To help sooth sore gums give her/ him something cold to chew on, i.e. a stuffed frozen Kong® toy or an old wash clothes soaked in low-sodium chicken broth and frozen.

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Maher & Hound  
Dog Training And Behaviour

Karen Maher – 07789 436075

[karen@maherandhounddogtraining.com](mailto:karen@maherandhounddogtraining.com) / [maherandhounddogtraining.com](http://maherandhounddogtraining.com)  
Instagram / Facebook @maherandhounddogtraining