Lake Pine Animal Hospital
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Puppy Biting & Teething Guide

> **Puppy biting and mouthing are normal parts of development. Puppies explore the world with their mouths, and teething can make chewing especially intense between 3-6 months of age. The goal is not to stop mouthing completely, but to teach appropriate bite inhibition and redirection.**

Why Puppies Bite

- Teething discomfort
- Play behavior
- Overstimulation or overtiredness
- Attention-seeking
- Normal exploration

Teaching Bite Inhibition

Bite inhibition means teaching your puppy to control the pressure of their mouth.

- If teeth touch skin, calmly say 'ouch' and pause play briefly
- Redirect immediately to an appropriate toy
- Resume play once calm
- Be consistent – everyone in the household should respond the same way

Managing Teething

- Provide durable chew toys designed for puppies
- Rotate toys to maintain interest
- Offer chilled (not frozen solid) rubber toys for gum relief
- Avoid hard objects that may damage developing teeth

Preventing Escalation

- End play if biting becomes too intense
- Do not run away when playing - this encourages chasing and nipping.
- Ensure adequate naps – overtired puppies bite more
- Avoid rough play that encourages grabbing hands or clothing
- Reward calm interactions frequently

What NOT to Do

- Do not yell, but a firm “No Bite” may help.
- Do not hold the mouth shut or use physical punishment,
- Do not use aversive techniques that create fear
- Punishment can increase fear and may contribute to defensive aggression later.

When to Contact Us

Contact us if biting seems aggressive rather than playful, if growling intensifies, or if your puppy guards toys or food. Early guidance prevents long-term behavior concerns.

With patience and consistency, most puppies outgrow intense mouthing. Lake Pine Animal Hospital is here to support you through every developmental stage.