

I'M SORRY!  
DID THAT  
HURT!?

OOPS!  
I thought  
your hand  
was a snack!



*Play To Behave's*  
MANAGE PUPPY BITING TO  
RAISE A DOG YOU TRUST AND LOVE

# The Steps To Manage Puppy Biting So You Can Raise A Dog You Trust And Love

A summary of the video by  
Dr. Carolyn Lincoln with Play To Behave  
[playtobehave.com](http://playtobehave.com)

- The 6 reasons your puppy might be biting
- The 4 Steps You Need to Take
- The 4 biggest mistakes people make

\*\*\***Safety always comes first** so if you need help, get a professional. Bite wounds can be a serious cause of infection so if your puppy's teeth breaks the skin, please see a doctor. If your puppy does not respond to the following recommendations OR if you are fearful of your puppy hurting you, someone else or even another animal, PLEASE consult a professional.

Biting and aggression is serious behavior and if there is a risk of injury, it is best to consult a Board Certified Veterinary Behaviorist, a Veterinarian with a Special Interest in Behavior, or a Doctorate Level Behaviorist before you consider a trainer. Get a good assessment, a management plan in place and follow the professionals recommendations for how to move forward which may or may not require a trainer.

## The 6 reasons your puppy might be biting

1. Hunger
2. Tired
3. Teething
4. Exercise
5. Poor Bite Inhibition
6. Fearful and Aggressive

## The 4 Steps You Need to Take For Puppy Biting

1. Be prepared -
  - a. Make sure all your puppy's basic needs are met and that there are no injuries or pain related reasons for biting
  - b. Have a place to confine your puppy with a crate, gate, etc.
  - c. Have toys on hand - one or two favorites not always around so they are more exciting and ones that keep your hands away from their mouth
2. Take your puppy out to play and keep the play low key if biting has been a real problem
3. If your puppy bites, say "Ouch!" to mark it but keep the "Ouch!" low key then give toy the puppy a toy
4. If your puppy bites a second time, then put your puppy away
  - a. Do this confinement calmly and unemotional with no eye contact or attention but not punishing
  - b. Stay nearby the puppy if needed. You don't want the puppy whining, crying and screaming so put your hand on the crate or gate if that helps and your puppy won't bite it!
  - c. Wait 10 min or so to bring out your puppy again

Repeat these steps if necessary as many times as needed. YES, could be what seems like hundreds of times!

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## The 4 biggest mistakes people make

1. People aren't prepared
  - a. Make sure you have toys handy in every area of the house
  - b. Everyone in family must understand how to follow the steps to stop the biting and be willing to follow through
    - i. Children need to be informed and may have to wait to play with the puppy until the biting is under control
    - ii. Children can be given supervised activities that are fun to do with the puppy but won't risk a bite
2. People don't have enough patience
  - a. Teaching a puppy not to bite takes time. They are young and need time to learn!
  - b. This is part of the responsibility you have raising your puppy. It can be more difficult if your puppy is one with a lot of drive, energy and focus and is bold and confident. You will need to channel the energy in the right way.
3. People aren't consistent
  - a. Everyone in a family isn't always capable and if you simply recognize that then you can have the people most capable of teaching this skill manage it. There is no shame in not being quick or observant of a puppy. We all have our strengths! Recognizing when this is not your strength is very admirable. Just get help when you need it!
  - b. When your puppy bites, try to think of your puppy saying "I'm tired and I want to be alone." Then you will react appropriately when the biting happens. You won't feel a need to correct or punish; just put the puppy away in an unemotional way. You are correcting it by giving it a meaning. Biting means the interaction and attention with you stops for a rest period.
4. People rough-house without a toy
  - a. Some puppies that are very mouthy and bitey can't do this especially if you keep changing the boundaries. It needs to be clear to the puppy that biting is not acceptable unless it is on a toy.
  - b. Instead use tugging for play
    - i. Let them decide how hard want to pull.
    - ii. Don't move the toy up and down or back and forth - the puppy can - but not you or may hurt their neck.
    - iii. It's fine if you "win" sometimes and your puppy "wins" other times. You do not need to worry about dominance. You puppy will learn to look to you for direction in many other ways.
    - iv. The game only starts when you start it and stops when you stop it. You are in control of the game.
    - v. Won't tug?
      1. Might need to have them chase it first by running it on the ground.
      2. Might need to teach your puppy the joy of tugging.