

BITE INHIBITION

A dog that has been taught to inhibit the force of its bite is a safe dog.

As we're certain you've found out - puppies bite - and thank goodness they do! Play biting is the means puppies learn to inhibit the force of their jaws.

Young litter mates will play fight with each other - this includes rolling around and of course, play biting.

Puppies have painfully sharp baby teeth, but the jaws are underdeveloped, enabling puppies to play bite safely. When a puppy bites a litter mate too hard, they get blasted with a piercing "YELP!" which initially makes them back off. But then something interesting happens - they start to play again, but with softer biting.

This is how puppies learn to inhibit the force of their biting, before they become adults with powerful and dangerous jaws. It is similarly essential for puppies to learn bite inhibition with humans.

Many will instruct to discourage all play biting which can be very dangerous. If not allowed to play bite, a puppy freshly taken from their litter mates may never have the chance to learn to control the power of their jaws. First we must teach to bite softly, and then to not bite at all.

By repeating the sequenced steps to the right puppy biting should become puppy mouthing within a few days. Congratulations - you've fooled your puppy into thinking you're so sensitive he mustn't exert any pressure while mouthing.

Teaching Bite Inhibition

Step 1

Allow your pup to play bite by softly chewing on your hand.

Step 2

As soon as your pup is a bit too rough, "YELP!" sharply and loudly.

Step 3

Don't pull your hand away - this makes you "chase-able". Let your puppy back away from you.

Step 4

Your puppy will likely lick your hand to appease you. Let them! Play may resume with a softer bite.