



## **BAD DOG or BORED DOG**

Is your dog counter surfing and eating your dinner, grabbing your precious possessions and running, excavating your landscaping or chewing your new furniture? Many people think that their housemates are bad dogs but maybe they are just bored dogs.

A bored dog can become a destructive pet when he's left alone. Leaving your dog with his favorite toys can help him pass the time. Better yet, provide some interactive dog toys that give him something to do – they will challenge him to think and “problem solve” to get what he wants. An active and focused mind means your furniture; shoes and household items won't get destroyed when you're away from home.

Some dogs are just fine when no one is home; they entertain themselves by sleeping all day. Other dogs want more action in their life whether anyone's home or not. They spend the day chewing, barking, shredding and any other activity they can find to entertain themselves. The problem with letting a dog find something to do on his own is that he ends up getting in trouble once his owner gets home.

Dog toys have come a long way from the simple squeaky toys and rawhide chews that most canines quickly grow tired of. After all, there's only so many times you can squeak a toy before it gets boring, and once the rawhide chew is gone; it's back to mischief making. If your dog needs something to do to keep him out of trouble, consider toys that can stimulate him and give him something to focus on. What you need are interactive dog toys that require your dog to think if he wants to get to the treat.

Wooden dog puzzles come in a variety of skill levels that can give your dog hours of stimulating problem solving to get to the treats hidden inside. They have to figure out how to slide blocks or pegs to find what they're looking for. Some are harder than others, but all of these dog toys challenge the smartest dogs. One of the harder dog puzzles has four layers that spin. The dog has to rotate the layers to get to pockets that hold his favorite treat.

For dogs who inhale their food, you might want to consider an interactive dog bowl

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that's designed to slow down how fast they eat. Dogs that wolf down their supper can have digestive problems, and certain dog breeds have a higher risk of developing bloat if they eat too fast. The interactive dog bowl slows down their eating by making them work for their supper in a fun way that stimulates their mind. It also helps your dog learn good eating habits by teaching him to not inhale his food. You can use the interactive dog bowl for treats instead of dog food to keep him entertained and stimulated when you're gone.

Interactive dog toys come in a variety of shapes and sizes. All of them require the dog to use his brain to get to the hidden treats. They are designed to hold up to the dog who likes to chew – but why chew on the outside when there's a treat inside? Figuring how to get the treat out is stimulating and satisfying.

You can also find interactive chew toys for dogs. They can give your dog hours of entertainment as they push, chew, tug or pull on the toy to get the treat. Some are designed to make the dog roll the toy around to get the treats to fall out. Others have the treat in plain sight and the dog has to figure out how to get the food prize out of a pouch.

When buying an interactive treat toy for your dog, make sure to get the appropriate size for them. Puzzle dog toys and interactive games are designed so any size dog can work the pegs or twists and turns they have to maneuver through to get to the treats. If you have a dog that gets into mischief every time you leave the house, providing him with an interactive dog toy can help him beat the boredom of being left alone.

If your puppy is a bundle of energy when you return from a busy day at work, our facility also has a group daycare program that might address your puppy's need for exercise. Group play, with other dogs and our dedicated staff, will decrease the energy level and also provide a safe environment for your dog to grow and experience positive interactions. A tired puppy is always a good puppy with less behavioral issues. Please check out our website for some additional information about our group program.

Dogs have become a very special part of our lives and there are many ways to address the problems that arise when we have to leave them to go to work or when we go on vacation or travel. Stop by or call our facility and we will turn your bad dog into a model canine citizen. Please remember this quote, "He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, his leader. He will be yours, faithful and true, to the last beat of his heart."