

NOT DIGGING THE DIGGING

WHY THEY DIG:

WHAT TO DO:

INSTINCTUAL: Thousands of years ago, it was necessary for dogs to bury uneaten food in order to survive. The dirt kept the food out of the sun and protected. Even though our domesticated dogs are fed daily, that urge may still be there for some dogs.

Redirect digging to an appropriate area. Pick a spot with loose sand or sandy soil, or build/buy a sandbox. Sand is cleaner than clay or dirt. Encourage by burying puppy's toys in that area. Start off with a little showing at first. Praise for finding the hidden treasure. Repeat often until reliable. Use "Leave It" if you see puppy digging elsewhere, and redirect his attention.

WORKING: Some dogs were bred to dig. Terriers and Dachshunds were bred as working and hunting dogs. They located vermin and dug prey animals out of their den.

Use barriers or repellant to discourage digging in off-limit areas. Cover holes with rocks, chicken wire, or something that isn't digging-friendly to the paws. But keep in mind, your pup needs an outlet, or he might find another activity that you won't care for either.

BOREDOM: Lack of mental or physical exercise. Digging occupies the time and burns off excess energy.

Exercise before leaving your dog in the backyard for long hours. Provide plenty of chew toys for entertainment.

COOLING OFF: Fresh dug up dirt is a nice cool place on a hot day.

*Provide a cool escape from the heat like a covering, cooling pad, or shallow kiddie pool.
*Fill a large plastic container with water and freeze with toys in it. The one gallon plastic ice cream containers work well. When frozen, dump in an area where your puppy can enjoy a nice cool treat!

ESCAPE: Some dogs dig to try to escape under a fence, etc.

Neuter! Neutering will decrease your dog's urge to search.

*If your dog tries to dig under the fence, place chicken wire in the ground to block the escape route.