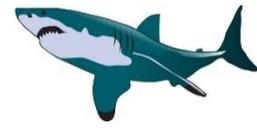




# Puppy Shark Attack



One of the most common issues experienced by new owners is excessive play biting of puppies.

Sometimes this can seem quite frightening as accompanied by barking and growling it can concern owners that they have ownership of a “Aggressive dog”

Firstly, it’s important to remember your puppy is young saying he is aggressive is like saying a two year old child who hit or kicked his friend at playtime is a violent person.

Whilst we must be clear puppies are not human the analogy helps us to explain how to educate rather than to punish- would you hit a child for rough play or teach them the correct way to play?

We are the educators of our dogs it is our job to teach them to behave in a socially acceptable way, we are not dogs ourselves and we shouldn’t try and mimic them, advise such as rolling dogs on their back is proven defunct, after all do we intend to spend our days weeing on our territory and sniffing peoples bottoms to greet them?

The main key points to remember in any form of training are

1. Consistency – everyone in the family must follow the same policy
2. Patience- Your puppy is a young animal it will take time and reputation to condition him with the correct behaviours losing your temper will not help.
3. Clarity- Be concise use simple commands and adjust the tone of your voice accordingly.
4. Rewards- Teach alternative behaviours that are preferable to the dog.
5. Don’t negatively reward, shouting at a puppy is actually giving them the attention they were after to you are inadvertently rewarding bad behaviour.

## Getting a plan of action

First and foremost is prevention do not put your puppy or children in a situation where issues are going to arise so supervise play sessions and don’t encourage wild screaming play from either party! Avoid over tired play times a tired puppy is often more prone to mouthing.

Work on fun controlled play sessions based on learning and puzzle solving there’s a wealth of information on brain games on the internet a good starting point would be [www.nina-ottosson.com/](http://www.nina-ottosson.com/) ensure your puppy has a time out area where he can go if he needs to rest and make that a no go area for younger family members.

## **Teaching the correct way to use the mouth**

The Vizsla is a mouthy breed they use their mouths as a child would their hands it's how they explore their world.

Encourage carrying of soft toys and licking, even putting a little butter on the hands and calmly verbally rewarding the puppy using a simple command such as "nicely" for licking.

If contact from teeth is made simply remove your hand.

## **When play biting starts.**

We are teaching the dog that the biting is not going to get him the reward he desires such as attention by play.

The moment biting starts use a command such "OUCH" if the puppy ceases to bite on the verbal command reward him, if he does not then remove your hands fold your arms and turn you back on him , if he tries to carry on jumping up nipping etc.. simply leave the room

You are teaching him that the negative behaviour spells the end of the fun.

You will need to repeat this often.

## **Why don't we roll dogs on their backs or smack them.**

Some dogs will simply see it as an extension of the game , no one of course should be hitting a dog hard enough to cause pain.

Fear of punishment can cause mistrust issues and effect recall, encourage resource guarding, Ultimately you have not taught the dog the correct way to respond in a situation.