



# LEASH BITING

**Does your dog jump up and grab the leash while you are walking together? Often this behavior is the result of an under-exercised, under-stimulated dog. Here are a few tips to stop dogs from biting at their leash.**

- 🐾 **Provide exercise/mental stimulation-** Playing with other dogs and practicing obedience and/or agility are good ways to exercise your dog. While you may think a fenced-in yard should provide enough exercise by itself, many dogs will not exercise without engagement. To maximize the benefit of the yard, go outside and play with your dog—consider fetch, flirt pole play, and other aerobic activities.
- 🐾 **Avoid over excitement-** When leashing your dog and going outside, use a calm voice. The more excited we are, the more aroused they get, and this can cause them to react by leash biting.
- 🐾 **Teach calm replacement behaviors**
  - 🐾 Focus
  - 🐾 Sit
  - 🐾 Drop it
  - 🐾 Leave it
- 🐾 **Walking with two leashes-** Your dog may enjoy biting the leash as a form of playing tug. To break this association, snap two leashes on your dog's collar. When he goes to grab one, drop it and hold onto the other. If he goes for that one, grab the first one again and drop the second. The dog is never rewarded by resistance on the other end of the leash, so the game is over. Your dog has learned that walk time is not tug time, and YOU have learned your dog enjoys playing tug. Consider getting a long rope toy designed for tug and making time to play appropriate tug games each day with your friend.
- 🐾 **Redirection-** You may already know when your dog will try to bite the leash. Maybe it's when you first put the leash on, or when you're walking outside and he sees something that excites him. Always have treats or a toy on hand and a toy to give to your dog just before you think that he is about to bite the leash. Or, try tossing it on the ground in front of him so he is encouraged to move forward without leash biting, and reward with an enthusiastic "Yes!"
- 🐾 **Do not allow your dog to practice these behaviors-** Prevention is always an important piece of successful behavior modification. The more often your dog gets to practice the inappropriate/unwanted behaviors, the harder it is to make them go away.