

## Safety

# What Type of Chew Toys are Safe for Dogs?



Dogs love to chew. Not only is it fun for them, it also helps keep their teeth clean and their jaws strong. For puppies that are teething, chewing helps their gums feel better. But which chew toys and treats are safe for your dog? Here's a guide to choosing the right chew toy.

### What type of chewer is your dog?

Watch your dog the first few times they play with a new toy to make sure it's right for how they chew. See if your dog falls into one of the categories below.

- **The shredder.** Put a toy in front of them, and it's their job to destroy it. They might even attempt to eat the pieces.
- **The inhaler.** These dogs are like vacuums. Now you see the toy, now you don't.
- **The lover.** These dogs savor their treats and are gentle with their toys. There's no need to worry about the toy's innards all over your house.

### Safe chew toys for dogs

When buying treats and toys, if you can't indent it with your thumbnail or can't easily break it, it's probably too hard for your dog's teeth. These toys are typically safe for dogs.

- **Firm rubber toys.** The hollow ones (which are great for holding treats) usually work well for all types of chewers. Just choose the size that matches your dog's mouth.
  - **Rope toys.** If your dog is a shredder, make sure they aren't pulling out the strings and swallowing them. Otherwise, these are considered safe.
  - **Durable stuffed toys.** These usually aren't tough enough for a shredder. If you have an inhaler or a lover, avoid toys with parts that could easily come off, like eyes, bells, or ribbons.
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- Tennis balls. These are okay for most chewers but keep an extra-close eye on shredders who might destroy and swallow pieces of the tennis ball. Over-chewing of the ball fuzz can wear down their teeth, too.

## Dog chew toys to avoid

Treats like rawhides, pig's ears, and bully sticks have been known to cause stomach problems (they can be high in calories, too). Inhalers should steer clear of these types of treats — they can choke or get a piece stuck in their gut. Be aware that the flavored coatings on some of these treats can also make a big mess on your floors and furniture.

Anything harder than your dog's teeth can crack or break a tooth, which hurts your dog and your wallet. Therefore, you should avoid:

- Bones
- Cow hooves
- Deer and elk antlers
- Chew toys made of hard plastic or nylon

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