

Protect Your Pup: Avoid These Dangerous Dog Toys

Dr. Megan Petroff

Your dog loves toys. Maybe they always have their favorite stuffed animal in their mouth, or they play with their frisbee or tennis ball every day. Toys are essential to your dog's health and happiness. Playing is fun, engaging, and keeps them active, but unfortunately, your dog's favorite toys could be dangerous to them.

Common potential dangers to dogs playing with toys include [choking](#), intestinal blockages, and harmful toxins used in plastics. Your dog's toys are important, but what's even more critical is choosing a safe toy for them.

Unfortunately, several of the most common and popular dog toys pose hazards to their health. This article will discuss common dangerous dog toys to help you make better decisions when shopping for your pup.

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Types of Dangerous Dog Toys

Toys are [dog essentials](#), but there are several toys you should never buy your dog, and unfortunately, these are some of the most common ones. Look around your house or your dog's toy box to see if you recognize anything on this list. Here are common dog toys to avoid:

Small toys

Always buy your dog toys that are perfectly sized for them. Most dog toys come in a range of sizes, dependent on the size of the dog. Buying toys that are too small for your dog poses a choking hazard and can cause intestinal blockages. Additionally, pieces of larger toys can break off and become hazards, so it's always a good idea to monitor your dog while they play.

Consider one of the most popular toys for dogs: the Kong. Kong toys dispense treats and offer mental stimulation, and they're made out of natural, durable rubber, making them one of the safest toys for your dog.

However, Kong toys for dogs can be dangerous if you purchase the wrong size. For example, purchasing the XS size Kong for a Golden Retriever, considered a large breed, can pose a choking hazard since it's easy to swallow. However, the XS size will work perfectly for miniature and toy breeds and puppies.

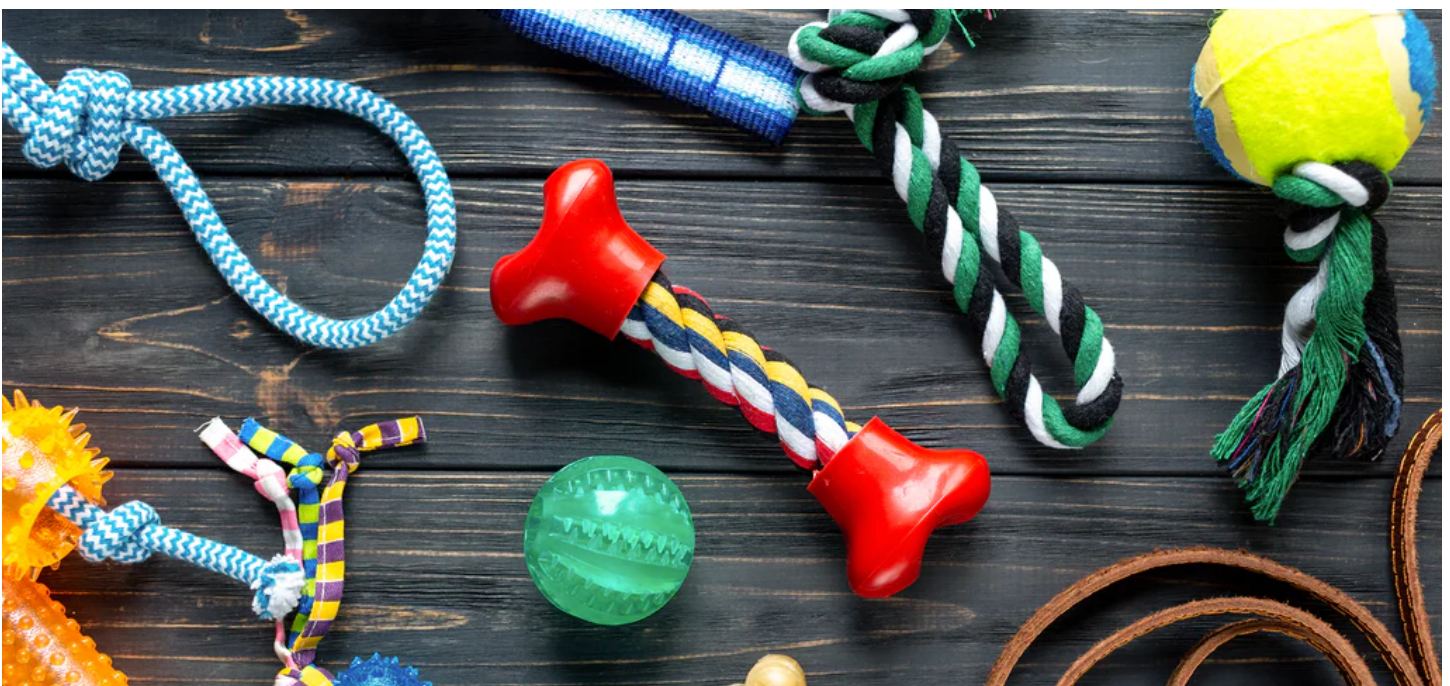
Rawhides

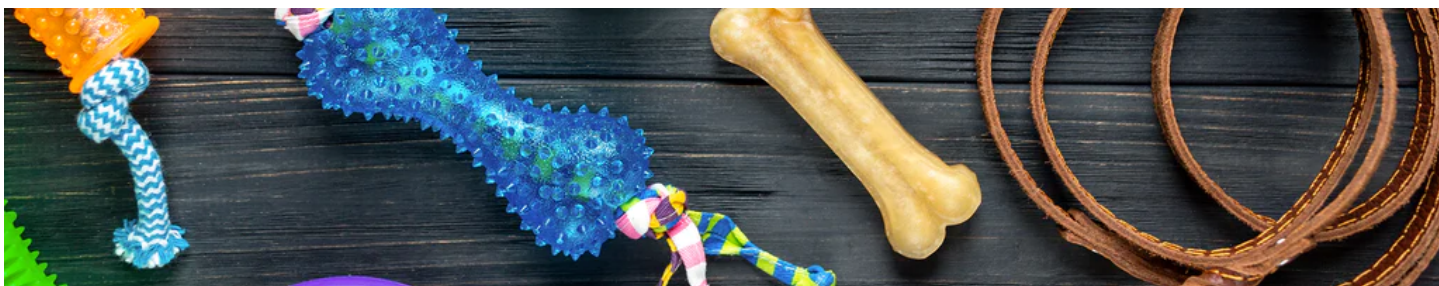
Dogs that love rawhides can spend hours chewing them and never get bored, making them a favorite among pet parents. Additionally, chewing is good for your dog's overall wellness because it provides them with a mentally stimulating activity that can help clean their [teeth](#).

That said, there are toys safe for your dog to chew and unsafe dog toys to avoid, such as rawhide. Why [are rawhides bad for dogs?](#) Rawhides are filled with chemicals and aren't easily digestible, posing serious choking and intestinal blockage hazards.¹ Dogs love rawhides, so luckily, several types are available, including rawhide alternatives, that are safer than others.

In addition to the type of rawhide, your dog's chewing style may be a factor in how safe it is for them. Some dogs are heavy chewers. As they moisten the rawhide, it becomes easier to rip off and swallow chunks. If your dog rips off a large piece, they may try to swallow it without fully chewing it, which could cause choking. Even if your dog manages to swallow the piece, it could still cause an intestinal blockage because their body won't be able to break it down.¹

On the other hand, moderate or soft chewers are less likely to break off large chunks of rawhide, making their chewing style much safer. In any case, not all rawhides are created equal. Some offer higher digestibility, while others are made from low-quality animal hides in unsafe processing conditions and exposed to various chemicals.





Toys with synthetic stuffing & squeakers

Many dogs love stuffed toys and toys with squeakers because they simulate prey.² However, while your dog may enjoy stuffed toys, they're not necessarily safe for them. Again, the safety level of a stuffed toy mostly depends on your dog's play style. For instance, some dogs gently carry their stuffed animals everywhere, while others are prone to ripping them up.

Synthetic stuffing in stuffed toys isn't safe for dogs because it can get stuck in their teeth or throat. In addition, many dogs can pass a little bit of stuffing, but it could cause intestinal blockages. The biggest risk of stuffed toys is to dogs that chew them up. If your dog is a destructive chewer, stuffed animals are a dog toy to avoid.

In addition to stuffing, you should consider whether squeaky toys are safe for your particular dog. Again, some dogs are soft chewers who won't rip open their toys to get to the squeaker. However, others will rip their toys within seconds and rip out the squeaker. Squeaky toys pose several risks to destructive chewers. Since the squeakers are small enough to be swallowed, they can cause choking and intestinal obstructions.

Again, the safety level of these toys depends on your dog's chewing and play styles. As dogs get older, they may be less interested in chewing but still enjoy having a stuffed animal. In these cases, your dog's stuffed toys pose no risk to them. However, if your dog is known to rip up the toys you give them, avoid stuffed toys at all costs.

Hard toys

There are several dog toys to avoid because they can break teeth or splinter and cause serious harm. For example, antlers and plastic chew bones are popular for heavy chewers because they're long-lasting and can withstand strong chewing. Unfortunately, the harder the material, the more dangerous it is to dogs because it can crack their teeth.

However, several plastic bone toys available for heavy chewers are considered safe. These toys are designed to break off in small chunks, which are relatively safe for digestion because of their size. Still, an aggressive chewer can easily break these hard toys and splinter them, making them sharp and unsafe for chewing.