

How to get your dog to stop digging

If your dog is leaving craters all over your yard, it's important to know your dog isn't doing it out of spite or a desire to destroy your landscaping; more likely they're seeking entertainment, attention, comfort, escape, prey or protection.



Entertainment

Dogs may dig for entertainment when they learn that roots and soil "play back." Your dog may be digging for entertainment if:

- They're left alone in the yard for long periods of time without the company of their human family.
- Their environment is relatively barren—with no playmates or toys.
- They're a puppy or adolescent and don't have other outlets for their energy.
- They're a terrier or other breed that was bred to dig.
- They're an active breed who needs a job to be happy.
- They've recently seen you gardening or working in the yard.

[Dog Toys on Amazon](#)

What to do

Expand your dog's world and increase their people time in the following ways:

- Walk your dog at least twice daily. Lack of exercise is a leading cause of behavioral problems.
- Play with them using [active toys](#) (balls, flying disks) as often as possible.
- Teach your dog a few commands or tricks. Practice these every day for five to 10 minutes.
- Take a training class with your dog and practice what you learn daily.
- Keep interesting toys in the yard to keep your dog busy when you're not around. Kong®-type toys filled with treats or busy-box dog toys work especially well. Rotate the toys to keep things interesting.

Hunting prey

Dogs often dig in an effort to catch [burrowing animals](#) or insects who live in your yard. This may be the case if the digging is:

- Focused on a single area rather than the boundaries of the yard.
- At the roots of trees or shrubs.
- In a "path" layout.

What to do

Search for signs of burrowing animals, then use safe, humane methods to fence them out, exclude them or make your yard or garden unattractive to them.

What not to do

Don't use any product or method that could be toxic or dangerous to your pets or other animals. Anything that poisons wildlife can poison your dog too.