

Why Does My Dog Eat My Underwear?

KONG Club

One of the most perplexing things about dogs is their fascination with underwear. It can be downright annoying when you discover that your pup has completely ruined another pair of underwear, especially when they are a nice pair. Let's not even mention the embarrassment you may experience when your dog goes running across the house with unmentionables in front of guests.

Why Does My Dog Eat My Underwear?

It is downright perplexing trying to figure out your dog's obsession with your underwear. But there is an easy explanation on why your dog is rooting around the laundry basket for your underthings.

The explanation? Their powerful noses.

Your dog's sense of smell is something that we would not be able to imagine. Their noses are up to [1,000 times more powerful](#) than ours. We know how much our dogs love to sniff every single thing when on walks and how smellier items will hold their attention longer.

When it comes to your underwear, the bottom line is that your dog is attracted to your scent! After all, you are their human, and they love to spend time with you. As we know, undergarments carry your odor after wearing them all day, which is like a fine perfume to our furry pals.

They're also made of cloth, which may remind your dog of [their favorite chew toy](#) or their cuddly blanket. Although we may find it just a little icky that our dog may be attracted to our underwear, it is your scent that they are attracted to. Which in dog-speak means that they like your scent and want to be near you.

Your dog may also be attracted to your socks and other articles of clothing. Have you ever witnessed your dog lying in a dirty clothes pile or your full laundry basket? It's full of your scent for them to bask around in. Underwear and socks are the most commonly stolen items of clothing as they are lightweight and easy to run off with.

So, yes. This behavior is flattering in its own way: Your dog is saying, "I love you." However, it's best to curb this habit.

Let's discuss.

Eating Foreign Objects: The Risks

Keep an eye on your dog if they have the habit of chewing on underwear, socks, or other non-edible objects. If they ingest something non-edible, there is a risk of it becoming stuck in your dog's digestive system.

If your dog has ingested part of your clothing, they may need [surgery to remove the objects](#) from blocking their digestive tract. They might need an endoscopy to pull underwear or socks from their stomach. Or, they could require surgery if the objects have moved from their stomach to their intestines.

If your dog has passed any of the clothing that they have eaten, it's important to monitor your dog closely to ensure that no loose threads or fabric still remain in their system.

You may not know that your dog has ingested socks or underwear. But if they have a history of eating non-food items, and are exhibiting symptoms including vomiting, lethargy, abdominal pain, nausea, and any changes in their bowel movements, consult your vet right away.

This could mean that your pup could have an obstruction that is causing these symptoms to appear. If these symptoms are left untreated for too long, it can spell out danger for your beloved pet.

How To Approach Surgery

This can be a scary situation, but it is a common occurrence in the veterinary world. If you suspect that your dog has eaten an article of clothing like your underwear or socks, you can always consult a KONG Club by AskVet veterinarian for advice.

How To Prevent This Behavior

As dog owners are well aware, our furry friends sometimes need barriers. We are also well aware that their nose can get our dogs into trouble. This is especially so if your dog is an underwear thief.

If your dog has a history of chewing on and ingesting socks and underwear, cut off any access your dog has to dirty laundry baskets on the floor. Be sure to avoid leaving any dirty clothes on the floor. You may need to put your laundry basket in the closet or laundry room and keep the door shut.

Using a taller laundry basket with a lid can be a good solution if you have a smaller dog who is unlikely to tip the laundry basket over or too short to reach the lid. If you have a taller or stronger breed, you'll need to shut the laundry basket away as they will probably be able to tip over the laundry basket. Take extra precautions with hyper-intelligent breeds like Border Collies, who might figure out a loophole that you did not predict.

Doing laundry more often can be helpful, as there is less dirty laundry to attract your dog's nose. Yes, this means putting it away too! We know how much of a chore it can be to put clean laundry away but think of it as a preventative measure, just like regular canine vaccines and [dental care](#)!

Puppy Preventative Measures

If you have a puppy, you may already be going through the stages where it seems like everything in your home is being covered in teeth marks. Teething is a common stage that both puppies and human babies go through. So, if you leave any dirty laundry within your puppy's reach, your puppy may think they have found the jackpot: clothes that smell like you and feel good on their sore gums.

As your puppy goes through their teething stage, giving them specific toys to chew on will alleviate them finding inappropriate things to chew, including any dirty laundry. Starting training as a puppy also helps keep your dog from ingesting bad things for the long term.

Commands

Using commands like “leave it” is helpful when your dog has gotten into something they shouldn't. As we know, when we see our dog chewing on something they shouldn't, they will quickly try to scarf it down if they know their human is coming to get it. Training your dog to leave things on command can help keep your dog safe.

When working with your dog on this command, make sure they are rewarded with their favorite treat. Your dog will soon learn that following this command will result in them getting a delicious morsel. No matter what age your dog is, they can be trained with just a little love, gentle encouragement, and tender patience.

Games, Puzzles, and Walks

Boredom may also cause your dog to sniff around and get their nose into places they shouldn't. If your dog is left alone during the day, they will benefit from games and treat puzzles to keep their attention from drifting to the pile of dirty laundry.

There are many varieties of treat puzzles to keep your dog busy during the day, like the Classic KONG. You can put your dog's kibble in a toy that dispenses as they roll the toy, keeping them physically and mentally busy.

Taking your dog on plenty of walks allows them to sniff to their heart's content and gives them a chance to exercise. Keeping your dog [engaged physically and mentally](#) keeps them from being bored and out of trouble.

Doggie Camera

Indoor cameras allow you to keep an eye on your dog while you are away from home. Many cameras are dog-oriented and allow you to talk to your dog through the camera and even deliver treats. Specially designed apps will alert you if any loud noises are heard (like laundry baskets being tipped over).

If you happen to catch your dog in the act, you can warn them through the camera. If your dog is happening to experience symptoms that are indicative of a blockage in their digestive tract, there may be video evidence of the ingestion if it happened within the camera's range.

Training Tips and More

We definitely love our dogs but may not love all the shenanigans their noses get them into. From getting into the trash to stealing undergarments out of the dirty laundry, our dog's noses just seem to be geared toward items with certain odors.

When your dog's nose leads them into trouble, you can use [the KONG Club app](#) to reach out to the AskVet team 24/7. The AskVet animal behaviorists can help you figure out why your pooch might be on the hunt for your laundry. And, if you think your dog is feeling unwell, the AskVet veterinarians are there as well. From training advice to medical care tips, our vets are ready for everything.

We know that being a pet parent is a full-time job and a KONG Club membership can help keep your active pooch happy and healthy!

Sources:

[How Dogs Use Smell To Perceive The World | VCA Animal Hospitals](#)

[Canine Enrichment | World Small Animal Veterinary Association](#)

[Gastrointestinal Foreign Bodies | American College of Veterinary Surgeons – ACVS](#)