Puppy Teething Toys

Teething is a natural and essential phase in every puppy's development. During this period, your puppy's milk teeth fall out, and her adult teeth emerge.

Even though it’s a pretty simple process, it can be quite uncomfortable for your pup. It can also lead to different chewing behaviors.

One way to soothe your puppy’s discomfort (and protect your furniture and belongings!) is through puppy teething toys.

Below, I’ll walk you through a full guide to the best teething toys for puppies, including DIY options, frozen toys, and tips on selecting safe and appropriate toys.

But first, I want to quickly cover what teething is and the symptoms you can keep an eye out for to know when it may be starting for your pup.

Puppy Teething

What Is Puppy Teething?

Teething in puppies is the natural process when a puppy's baby teeth, or milk teeth, fall out and their adult teeth grow in. It usually begins when your puppy is around three to four months old and can continue until your pup reaches about six months.

During the teething process, you’ll likely notice that your puppy has a strong urge to chew on various objects around the house. But your pup isn’t out to destroy your things! Rather, the urge is driven by the discomfort and pressure she feels in her gums as her new teeth emerge.

Puppy Teething Stages

To help you prepare for your pup’s teething, here’s a rough timeline to keep in mind:

- **3 to 6 weeks:** Milk teeth start to appear.
- **8 to 12 weeks:** Most puppies will have a full set of 28 milk teeth.
- **3 to 4 months:** Milk teeth begin to fall out, and adult teeth start to emerge. This is when teething symptoms often begin.
- **6 to 7 months:** Most adult teeth should be fully emerged by this stage, forming a complete set of 42 teeth.

Puppy Teething Symptoms

During teething, it’s normal for puppies to exhibit several symptoms as they try to alleviate the discomfort they feel.

These symptoms and their intensity can vary from dog to dog, but generally they include:

- **Excessive Chewing:** Puppies may chew on furniture, shoes, and anything else they can find. Providing appropriate chew toys can help direct this behavior.
- **Drooling:** Increased drooling may occur as the teeth emerge through the gums.
- **Irritability:** The discomfort of teething may lead to changes in behavior and increased irritability.
- **Mild Fever:** Some puppies may experience a slight increase in body temperature.
- **Bleeding Gums:** Don't be alarmed if you notice a little blood on chew toys. This can be normal as the teeth break through the gums.

Puppy Teething Toys

Teething toys are an essential tool for any puppy owner during the teething phase. Not only do they help protect your furniture and personal belongings from your pup's insatiable need to chew, but they also provide essential relief to your dog's painful, itchy gums.

Puppy teething toys can be fun and therapeutic, satisfying the natural urge to chew while aiding in the development of healthy adult teeth.

However, they’re made from various materials and come in different shapes and sizes … so how do you know what’s best for your puppy?

Here’s a detailed guide to help you out…

Best Teething Toys For Puppies

A wide variety of toys are designed specifically to ease your pup’s teething discomfort. Here's a look at some of the best options:

- **Chew Toys:** These toys are typically made from rubber or soft plastics, which are gentle on the gums but satisfying to gnaw on. They come in various shapes and sizes, so you can find one that fits your puppy's mouth and chewing style.

- **Edible Toys:** Edible toys like chew bones or treats are specially formulated for teething puppies. They satisfy the natural urge to chew and can be eaten over time, providing both nutrition and chewing pleasure.

- **Frozen Teething Toys:** These toys can be frozen to provide extra relief to sore and inflamed gums. The cold sensation helps numb the area, reducing pain and irritation.

- **Plush Toys with Chewable Parts:** While plush toys might not be the first choice for a teething puppy, some are designed with chewable parts like rubberized feet or ears. This kind of teething toy for puppies can offer both soft comfort and chewable satisfaction. Just make sure to follow the safety tips that we reveal later on.

- **Textured Toys:** Toys with varied textures can provide different types of stimulation to the gums and teeth. They may have ridges, bumps, or soft and hard parts to engage your puppy's interest.
- **Interactive Chew Toys:** An interactive teething toy for puppies might hold food or dispense treats as your puppy chews. These toys can make chew time more engaging and rewarding.

DIY Puppy Teething Toys

For those who prefer homemade solutions, DIY puppy teething toys can be a great option.

Plus, these solutions are easier and cheaper than you'd think. Simple items like rope and old clothes work just fine as homemade puppy teething toys.

We have a whole guide on how to make your own dog toy, but here are two of our favorite, easiest options for homemade puppy teething toys:

Rope Toys

Choose the size of your rope based on your dog's size or what you have available. A good diameter is around a half-inch for smaller breeds, or a thicker diameter for larger dogs. A length of 12 to 18 inches is works well. Opt for natural materials like sisal, jute, or untreated cotton, avoiding chemically treated ropes.

Once you have your rope, tie a knot directly in the center. Additional knots can be added for more texture. If you're using a thin rope, double knotting can provide more substance for your pup to chew on.

Alternatively, recycle old denim jeans into a unique rope toy. Simply cut the legs, and consider hemming the edges to prevent fraying. Fold the denim into a length that can be knotted in the center, and voila! You have a homemade, chewable toy.

Braided T-Shirt Toys

Here's another good homemade toy for your pup … especially if you use a t-shirt with your scent on it (this will give your new family member familiar smells in her new home).

To make puppy teething toys out of shirts, start by cutting the t-shirt into strips. You want strips to be an inch wide and 2 feet long. Group them into three piles of 5-10 strips. Tie a knot in one end. Braid them together and tie a big knot in the other end. That's it!

Frozen Teething Toys For Puppies

Frozen teething toys can provide additional relief by numbing and soothing those sore areas.

Here are two of my favorites:

DIY Frozen Cloth

A simple homemade frozen teething toy can be made by:

- Wetting a clean cloth
- Wringing it out
- Freezing it

Once frozen, the cloth becomes a crunchy, chewable toy that's perfect for teething relief. It's a cost-effective and quick solution that can be easily replaced as needed.

Frozen Raw Bones

For another natural and tasty option, consider offering your puppy a frozen raw bone. Ensure the bone is appropriately sized for your puppy and comes from a reliable source.

Freezing the bone not only makes it a refreshing chew but also extends the chewing time, providing more prolonged relief. Always supervise your puppy when giving raw bones to prevent choking or splintering.

Safe Teething Toys For Puppies

Generally speaking, all the best puppy teething toys we recommended above are safe.

However, not all toys are suitable for teething. In fact, some of the most popular chew toys aren’t the safest.

If you’re thinking about introducing a new toy to your pup, here’s what you should keep in mind first:

Non-Toxic Materials

Always check the materials used in the toys you are buying. Look for products that are labeled as non-toxic and free from harmful chemicals.

For example, not all tennis balls are dog-friendly. You want to ensure your tennis ball is made with Grade A rubber, and doesn’t contain harmful coatings or gases.

Many reputable brands produce toys using food-grade rubber or silicone, which are safe for puppies to chew on. They’ll be marked as such.

Appropriate Size

Selecting the right size toy is crucial for your puppy's safety. If a toy is too small, it could be swallowed and cause choking, whereas a toy that is too large might be too challenging for your puppy to chew on comfortably.

Any toy's packaging should provide guidance on the appropriate size for different breeds and ages. This can help you decide if it’s a good fit for your puppy.

Durability

Teething puppies can be aggressive chewers, so it's essential to choose toys that are durable and designed to withstand intense chewing. Toys that quickly break apart can pose a choking hazard.

Cooked bones, for example, should never be given because they can splinter off into small pieces that are easy to choke on.

You should also inspect toys for any small parts or loose threads that could be easily pulled off and swallowed by your puppy. Things like buttons, ribbons, or other decorations might look cute but could pose a risk if ingested.

If a toy shows signs of wear or damage, replace it promptly.

Supervised Play

Finally, even with the safest teething toy for puppies, it's wise to supervise your puppy during playtime.

Monitoring your puppy will allow you to step in if a toy breaks or if your puppy starts chewing on something dangerous (or expensive!).

Bottom Line

Teething can be frustrating for puppies and their owners. If your pup reaches that age where she starts chewing on things she shouldn’t, then puppy teething toys can be your best friend.

Plus, these toys don’t have to break the bank. Homemade puppy teething toys made from rope or old clothes will get the job done in a fix.

If your pup has extra sensitive gums, you can even try using frozen puppy teething toys.

Just remember to double check on the safety of the materials in the toys, and supervise your pup while she’s chewing. By being mindful and attentive, you can turn this potentially challenging phase into an enjoyable bonding experience for you and your pup!