



Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA

# Destructive Digging

Digging is a natural, enjoyable behavior for your dog. Excessive, destructive digging is most common in bored, isolated, underexercised dogs. She needs lots of vigorous physical exercise. She needs to play with you, run with you, do obedience training with you. She needs a world that's bigger than just your house and yard.

Until you solve this problem, your dog must be kept away from any area where digging is not permitted. If you leave her alone in the yard, she will continue to dig and be rewarded for it, since digging is a self-rewarding activity.

Just as you give chew toys to a dog who enjoys chewing, you can give a digging-pit to a digger. Encourage, praise, and reward her lavishly for digging in her pit. Confine her and supervise her to prevent her from digging anywhere else. You can also use aversives to keep dogs out of areas where you don't want them to dig. Pet stores carry commercial sprays, or you can try sprinkling cayenne pepper on the soil, it also works with many dogs.

Once you've completed the "yes" part of the training, teach her that the rest of the yard is off-limits for digging activity.

**For more info, call our free Behavior Helpline (650/340-7022 x783 or, for Spanish, x786) or consider a low-cost consultation. To make a consultation appointment, call 650/340-7022 x667. The PHS/SPCA Behavior Department, like many shelter programs, is funded by donations.**