

# PET PEEVES PERIODICAL

A newsletter dedicated to preserving the human-animal bond through behavior counseling.



## Why Does My Dog Do That?

*Those things your dog does just to annoy you!*

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Have you ever had your dog do something and wonder “Why, why did you just do that?” There are certain behaviors that dogs love to do, and while most people think they do it just to be annoying, in all actuality it is just a normal behavior. Sometimes there’s a reason behind these behaviors, but sometimes there’s not. It’s just what they do!! Let’s talk about a couple of the most common of these annoying behaviors.

Have you ever seen your dog just rolling away in the grass? You’re thinking “Oh, how cute is that”, but then he walks up to you. And guess what? He reeks!! While you are thoroughly disgusted, he is as happy as a clam. Why do dogs do this? Why does rolling in the most repulsive smells give them such enjoyment? Well, there are a couple of reasons why they do this. When they roll in this scent, it is disrupting another animal’s scent markings, while at the same time placing their own scent in that spot. They also do this as a way to groom themselves. Rolling can help them shed some of their undercoat. The only way to keep dogs from rolling in the nasty smells is by keeping a watchful eye and using a leash.

Next up is one of the more embarrassing topics for clients to talk about. Mounting! Why do dogs feel the need to hump our legs? Why do they hump other animals? Mounting behavior isn’t necessarily for a sexual reason. Usually it has some sort of a social component to it. Mounting is one of the first behaviors noticed during puppy play. When a dog mounts a person it is all about control, not sex. This behavior can be seen in dominantly aggressive dogs or dogs that are just pushy, but have no aggression problems. It is an attention seeking behavior and is NOT to be tolerated. Implementing a “nothing in life

is free” program into your household is recommended. This means your dog doesn’t get ANYTHING without working for it first. They need to sit before getting fed, a down stay before going outside, and even performing some sort of command before getting any form of attention from you. If they start to mount, using a “no” or “off” command and then redirecting them to a more appropriate behavior (i.e.: chewing on a toy) is recommended.

Another not so common, but embarrassing behavior is masturbation. Yes, dogs do it. Sometimes it can be pleasure derived, but most commonly it’s in response to a stressful situation. Usually this behavior will disappear on its own once the issue causing the anxiety or stress is addressed.

Why do dogs insist on eating grass and then proceed to vomit? There isn’t a really good answer to this question that is true to all cases. Some people believe it’s a sign for gastrointestinal upset and that the dog is trying to self medicate. Others believe it may indicate that the dog is lacking fiber in its diet. Sometimes getting a food with a higher fiber content or adding bran/vegetables to the diet will help with this.

Is your dog a chaser of all things with wheels? This is not only an annoying behavior to deal with, but can also cause injury to the dog. This behavior is usually not a sign of aggression, but rather that they are trying to chase a threat from their area. They are constantly being positively reinforced when they do this, because they are always successful in getting the person/wheels to go away. It is because of this that this behavior usually continues and gets worse with time. Even though these dogs are usually not trying to attack, the passing people assume they are and

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### RESOURCES

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### Annoying Dog Behaviors cont.

could potentially threaten your dog. This threat could make your dog respond inappropriately! These dogs should always be confined to avoid any future incidents to your dog as well as to any passersby's!!

I hope this sheds a little light on some of those annoying behaviors our dogs like to do. Unfortunately, since they are normal behaviors it is difficult to stop them. With most of these behaviors it's easiest just to avoid certain situations. Good Luck!



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### DID YOU KNOW?

- About 90% of dog owners notice one or more behavior problems they would like to improve. Chances are your dog does something you would like help with correcting. Please let us know if we can be of any assistance to you. The majority of dogs in rescues or at humane societies are there because of behavior problems. Get help *before* the behavior continues for too long and you are frustrated.

I'm still looking for article suggestions from you!! Is there anything you ever wondered about or anything your own pets have done that might be useful for other people to learn about.. Don't hesitate to let me know!

Amanda