

DIGGING

By Terena and Nancy Thomas



There are several reasons why dogs take up earth-moving. You must discern the cause(s) of the problem in order to begin the correct remedy. Choose which of the following best suit your situation, and dig in!!

- 1. Heredity calls the terrier or terrier mix dog to dig. The work 'terrier' is derived from 'tera' meaning earth. These dogs are bred to dig! This instinct can be very strong. The best avenue to take is one of diverting your excavation specialist to an area all his own to dig in bliss. A fenced off area of the yard just for his earth work, or even a deck with a sand box will keep you both happy.**
- 2. Pregnant females sometimes burrow to create a natural nest for their puppies. Providing your expectant pet with a whelping box filled with clean rags or paper to shred and hollow out should channel this nesting behavior to a better location.**
- 3. Summer heat often makes it a necessity to have a cool spot for your four-legged friend to rest. A shady spot is always cooler underneath the top layer of soil. If your bulldozer is digging to lie in a cool place, relief from the heat is the answer. Many dogs will cool themselves in a wading pool with shallow water then lie in the shade without digging. Some require a large sand box with damp sand in the shade for a cool summer bed.**
- 4. Treasure mining or stashing is a favorite hobby of some canines. The simple solution is to locate and remove all of the buried treasures, and don't let him have any thing he might want to hide when he is out!**
- 5. Gardeners sometimes have an imitator. Your dog may watch you digging in the garden and want to try it for himself. These copy-cats can be curbed by never letting them see you when you are gardening. Put them inside or in an area of the yard on the other side of the house.**
- 6. Males that have not been neutered can smell a female that is in season ten miles away. They dig to satisfy the screaming of their hormones telling them to do anything to get to this female. Have him neutered right away he will feel much better soon.**
- 7. Boredom and the frustration due to loneliness are the most frequent causes of digging. Isolating any dog for hours on end can force a dog to become destructive as a means of releasing tension. Inviting your pet in to become part of the family will**

ease his loneliness. Have your dog sleep in your room at night. Take him jogging or walking, or play fetch. Feed him a kong with smeared peanut butter and kibble in it. He needs to exercise to relieve the tension and use his energy in a safe way. Enjoy time with your canine companion. Always remember his need to be with you. Never isolate and ignore him!!

Some owners scold or spank their dogs when they find a hole that has been dug. This will NOT prevent or cure the problem. Dogs can not make the connection between the hole, his responsibility for it, and his master's anger. If you see your digger "in the act", while he is digging, command "stop" in a deep gruff voice. Follow the solutions for your specific situation and you will be on your way to a tunnel-free terrace! If the above mentioned methods don't eliminate the problem contact the Canine Country School to tailor a unique training method for you and your pet.

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