



## Possessive Behavior

Possessive behavior is very common in dogs. Generally, these dogs are protecting things that are very important to them, such as food, chew treats, toys, or sleeping areas. When a dog is guarding one of these items they may show teeth, growl, snap, or even bite. The following are some basic guidelines and tips to help you avoid any negative situations with your new dog.

- Don't touch, pet, or disturb your dog when he is involved in one of these activities he enjoys such as eating, chewing on a toy, or sleeping.
- Only feed your dog dry food. When the food bowl is empty, pick it up and put it away. Feed your dog in separate meals instead of free feeding throughout the day.
- If your dog has a history of growling when they are resting or sleeping do not allow your dog to sleep on furniture or beds. Give your dog a dog bed of their own and respect his space.
- If you must move your dog while he is sleeping, do not physically push or pick up your dog. Instead, wake them up or get their attention with your voice or by clapping and then call them over to you. If this doesn't work, toss a yummy treat like chicken over by your dog, but away from the bed. When your dog follows the treat, praise them and then toss another treat further away until your dog is no longer on the bed and guarding his space.
- An alternative is to keep your dog on a lightweight leash and harness while they are in the home. When you must move your dog, pick up the leash and gently lead them away.
- Don't give a dog who is possessive of him chew treats yummy treats such as rawhides or pigs ears. Instead offer him non-edible chews such as Nylabones or Boodah Velvets if he must chew on something.
- If your dog steals something, do not chase them or yell and reprimand him. Instead, toss one of his favorite treats near him. When he drops the stolen item, continue to toss more treats away from the stolen item and praise him. When he is far enough from the item that you feel comfortable, pick it up and remove it from the area.

### Last Tips!

Always ask your dog to "sit" before you do anything for him. This includes petting, greeting, putting down the food bowl, and giving him treats. Make sure other in your family and visitors are aware of and follow these same rules.