



Got Digging?

Are you tired of falling into trenches in your yard? Does your dog think his idea of landscaping is better than yours? Digging is a frequent problem I am consulted about, particularly in the Spring and Summer. Dogs dig for several reasons. Some common ones are:

- Trying to get to underground critters such as gophers
- Creating a cool spot to lie in
- Recreation
- Burying and unburying prized items like chews or bones



One of the more challenging problems is digging for gophers and other creatures. The only sure way to stop it is to get rid of those pesky gophers and moles. If you have a Terrier or similar breed that was bred for vermin control including tracking and trailing underground critters, digging after them is an innate characteristic (which you hopefully were aware of prior to adding your dog to your family). There are sports such as [Earthdog](#) that are a great outlet for your Terrier's natural tendencies.

For dogs just looking for a cool spot, provide nice shady areas for them to relax in. You can also put a kiddie wading pool in the yard filled with a few inches of water for your dog to splash around in. However, the best solution is to bring your pup inside on really hot days.

Burying prized items has been a fun game for many dogs for generations. They love to bury things and then dig them up to enjoy at a later time. If you can provide them an appropriate area to do this, you can keep both your dog and your family happy. One solution is to make a doggy sandbox in which you bury things like chews, toys, and biscuits for your dog to dig up. You will have to direct them to the sandbox for a while and keep burying treasures for them to find. Over time you should see less digging in your yard and more time spent in the sandbox.

For any digging problem, you'll need to redirect your dog to a behavior you'd prefer them to do. This means no unsupervised time outdoors while you're training alternate behaviors. Digging is self-reinforcing and a difficult habit to curb. Decide what you'd rather your dog do instead and spend time teaching him that behavior.

And don't forget daily aerobic exercise! A tired dog is good dog!