



DOG HUMPING

Humping is a behavior that is most embarrassing to owners, turning our faces red! When your dog mounts another dog or even a person, it is so tempting to yell at the dog, to pull the dog away, or even pray that the ground swallows you up. With patience, you can help get your hump-happy dog to understand how to calm their embarrassing behaviors.

So Why Do Dogs Hump?

Good news! Humping is an extremely common behavior. You are not alone! Despite it appearing sexual in nature, humping is often not sexually motivated. So, why do dogs hump? Often, humping is an attempt at social dominance, a sign of stress, over-stimulation or acting out.

Dr. Burch, a certified applied animal behaviorist states “When a pillow or stuffed animal are the objects of your dog’s affections, there’s a good chance the dog has simply gotten excited and over-stimulated. Rowdy play can cause some dogs to get out of control”.

Humping can occasionally be a sign of a medical problem. An example, is that humping can signal infection or irritation in male dogs, signaling potential prostate problems. In some cases, humping can be a sexual, pleasure-seeking behavior. Humping being sexual in nature is most often seen in younger dogs that haven’t been spayed or neutered.

Additionally, Humping is not a male dominated problem. Both male and female dogs are commonly seen humping for the same reasons.

The Humping Problem

A few seconds of humping between dogs can be normal in play. As an example, when playing, dogs sometimes take turns mounting each other during the excitement of the game. However, many dogs don’t like to be mounted, so to prevent a fight, it’s important to do some work and avoid even the simplest form of mounting. Humping will be easier to prevent if you catch it early instead of waiting until it has turned into a full habit. Even if you may want to laugh when you see your dog hump, it’s best to step in and redirect them before this becomes a behavior they become consistent in.

How Do You Stop Your Dog From Humping?

If your dog is chewing, licking or showing any other signs of distress, the humping may be signs of a deeper medical issue. If your dog is displaying these sorts of behaviors, an appointment with your vet may be needed.

Another consideration is other causes of stress that may be causing your dog to act out. Has your dog been getting plenty of exercise and mental stimulation? Are they being aggravated by something at home? If these are signs you are noticing, please consider what you can do to help remove these stressors so your dog can relax.

Once you have ruled out medical or environmental causes, we can now consider how to work on these behaviors. Having a hump free home starts with training. Since humping can sometimes be about domination, using correct training methods can help your dog trust in your leadership and get them to relax. Training will help make it easier for your dog to get along with other dogs and people.

If your dog is trained but still humping, you can put that training to use. The best way to deal with humping is to redirect the behavior. This lets your dog know that the behavior is unwanted and allows for positive reinforcement of the behavior you redirected them to. When the humping first begins, you can give your dog a simple behavior like Sit or Down and reward them strongly when they do those behaviors. You can redirect with a game of fetch or by distracting your dog with a walk outside for some exercise.

Prevent Chances For Humping

If you're your dog has a chance to practice a behavior, then it will continue to encourage that behavior to continue. If your dog is being persistent in humping a guest and redirecting them isn't working, it's best for you to calmly take them to a quiet area of the house, or perhaps into their crate. Remember not to yell or fuss at your dog, as they aren't doing this on purpose to embarrass you.

Managing your dog's environment is important to minimize humping. Make sure your dog has chew toys and other activities which can keep them occupied and help them burn off some excess energy. If your dog's humping is triggered by, take it away until the behavior has stopped. If you are expecting a visitor that you definitely don't want being humped, the best prevention is to keep your dog in a clam, quiet space before they arrive.

If your dog is not spayed or neutered, experts recommend it as a way of calming sexually motivated mounting. Make an appointment with your veterinarian to see if your dog is old enough for the process.