



## **“Why Do Dogs Dig?”**

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I have often wondered what inhibits a dog to dig. It might be out in the field next door at the base of a pesky gopher hill, or perhaps it's in his pen underneath his fabulous dog house filled with plush pillows. It could even be right in the middle of your freshly planted flower bed. Most recently I was sitting out in a lawn chair enjoying a quiet afternoon in the sun overlooking the perennial garden when all of a sudden, there was a beautiful display of rainbow colors flying out of my garden. I guess “Jack”, my humongous English Labrador --- thought he saw a gopher! Well, after sitting there in total disbelief, I gathered up my shredded flower pieces and marched “Jack” into his kennel for a “time out”. And yes, he gave me the “sad eyes look!”

So, what do you do if your dog is digging up your homestead? First off, you need to realize that digging is a natural form of exercise and a stress-releaser for your dog. If you find that your dog is digging in places you don't want him to, than you must either find a place where he can dig or keep him occupied with other activities. Dogs need approximately two hours of exercise per day. If he can play, bark, chew and dig (in the right places), he will release energy and anxiety, eliminating all kinds of behavior problems to include aggression. Try to find time to throw a ball, frisbee, stick or other toy for him to chase. This will allow him to release his pent-up energy while making obedience training fun for both of you.

Find him his own place in your yard to dig. Maybe he'll plant his own veggies. Let him know that it's okay for him to dig there by bringing him over to the spot and placing a toy or treat on the ground. You can also bury it slightly under the dirt....maybe even help him dig it up. Occasionally dogs will enjoy digging to get away from the heat. Make sure that your dog has plenty of drinking water available when he is outside.

Experts say that if you wish to discourage your dog from digging, use some of the following suggestions. 1) Buy some chicken wire and put it in every hole he digs [dogs hate chicken wire] 2) Get a hand held air horn at a boating supply store and blow it every time you catch him in the act. He will soon associate digging with a negative experience. 3) Firmly take him by the scruff of the neck and shake him saying "No!" at the same time, 4) you can put granular pet repellent in the holes. 5) If you find him digging in the wrong place, correct him and show him (again) his designated spot. Finally, show your approval by praising his digging at the right spot. A well-trained dog is an asset to his family.

October is "Adopt-A-Dog Month!" Beltrami Humane Society has a variety of breeds of dogs at this time waiting for their very own special new homes. "Lacie" is a female, German Pointer who has gorgeous coloring and is full of excitement. She would like to be out along a hunting trail, or romp and play in a large yard. "Daisy-girl" is a Springer Spaniel, who is very loving and craves attention. Her big brown eyes can't help but be noticed. "Sullivan" is a golden-reddish Labrador cross who is spry, energetic and ready to play as soon as there is a playmate. Other dogs waiting for adoption include a sheltie, a large collie, two terriers'-x, golden and black labs, shepherds, a tree walker coon hound, beagles and others. Adoption fees range anywhere from \$80.00 up.

See our wide selection of dogs at 1612 Carr Lake Rd SE, Bemidji, MN. Our phone number is (218) 751-7910. Hours of operation are 12-5:30 p.m., Tuesdays through Saturdays. Check out our website photo gallery at [www.beltramihumane.com](http://www.beltramihumane.com) or see a number of our animals on [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com).

Upcoming Special Event: "Walk for Animals" – October 20, 2007. Come on down to the Rotary Pavilion at the waterfront, 11:00 a.m. Sign up to walk a shelter dog or bring your own dog to exercise as we walk from Paul Bunyan & Babe down to Nymore Beach and back. Pick up a Walk Packet at the shelter, Pet Zone, Animal Care Clinic or Pets Plus and see who can get the most sponsors of your walk. There will be "mega food, prizes and fun!" Join in on the "Draw Your Special Pet Contest". Enjoy the fresh air and our colorful fall weather!

SHELTER WISHES: Medical \$\$ donations to help cover the cost of spaying/neutering, animal vaccinations and overall animal healthcare, Pea Rock for the Dog Yards, Clorox Bleach, 33-35 gal trash bags.