



Humping Behaviour in Dogs

Overview

- Mounting and humping is a normal behaviour for dogs, but if it happens regularly, it can be quite disruptive and undesirable!
- Humping is something both male and female dogs do, and despite popular belief, it's not always sexually motivated.
- Training your dog not to hump usually involves distracting them, and if it's hormone driven, neutering may also help.

Why do dogs hump?



Humping is a totally natural and instinctive behaviour for both male and female dogs. Some of the most common triggers include:

- **Sexual** – it's perfectly normal for unneutered dogs to want to hump due to their hormones. Some hump other dogs, some hump people, and others hump their toys and blankets.
- **Play** – mounting is common when a dog gets over excited during play.
- **Excitement** – if a dog is over excited, or very energetic, mounting and humping can help get rid of excess energy.



- **Stress** – some dogs mount or hump to relieve stress and anxiety.
- **Medical problems** – a dog may mount and rub against an object if they have itchy skin, which can sometimes lead to humping. Although this is very rare, mounting can also sometimes be associated with [bladder and urine problems](#).

How to stop your dog humping

Never punish your dog for humping – it's a normal and natural behaviour for them, so they won't understand why you're telling them off. If it doesn't happen often and doesn't bother you, it may not need addressing. However, if it's happening regularly, or becoming a problem, you might need to take action. Here are some of our top tips to reduce humping behaviour:

- **Socialise from a young age** – socialising your dog with others from a young age will help teach them how to play and interact appropriately.
- **Neutering** – neutering your dog can help if their humping is hormone related – this usually has more of an effect on males than females.
- **Exercise** – ensure your dog gets enough exercise to get rid of any excess energy.
- **Remove any triggers** – if your dog humps to relieve stress, remove the stress from their life. If your dog only humps a certain toy, remove the toy. Speak to your vet or an accredited behaviourist for more advice.
- **Teaching calmness** – if your dog humps when they get over excited, you will need to learn how to keep them calm and control their excitement (usually with treats). For more information check out our advice on [reward based training](#).
- **Distraction** – if your dog humps to get you, or other dogs to play, it's important to teach them that the fun stops when they start to hump. When they start to mount, distract them with a treat, ask them to sit, and give them the treat. You will need to repeat this every time it happens. If your dog continues to hump, you may need to remove them from the situation for a minute or two, to calm them down. You will need to be patient – it often takes time and a lot of repetition to stop the behaviour completely.



When to contact your vet

Contact your vet for advice if your dog is excessively mounting and humping, or becomes aggressive when you try to stop them. They will check your dog for health problems, and discuss the best next steps to reduce the behaviour. It's likely your vet will recommend that your dog is seen by an [accredited behaviourist](#).

Am I eligible for PDSA veterinary treatment?

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