

Dogs Eating Poo

Why Does My Dog Eat Poop?

If you've caught your furry friend munching on something that makes your stomach churn, you're not alone. Many dogs have a not-so-charming habit called coprophagia, which is just a fancy term for eating poop. Whether it's horse manure, cat droppings, or even the leftovers from another dog's business, this behaviour is surprisingly common among our four-legged pals. But what gives?

Understanding the Behaviour

First off, don't jump to conclusions that your pup is missing some vital nutrients. While it's a popular myth that poop-eating indicates a nutritional deficiency, the reality is that many dogs simply find it tasty! For them, it's a smorgasbord of interesting smells



and flavours.

Is It Dangerous?

Despite the amusing nature of this behaviour, it's essential to discourage it, as it can pose health risks. Some animal faeces, especially those from livestock, can harbour worming medications or parasites that could be harmful to your dog. Here are some signs to keep an eye on:

- If your dog suddenly starts this habit out of the blue, it's a good idea to schedule a vet check-up. There might be an underlying issue that needs addressing.
- Your pup might be feeling underfed. If you suspect they're not getting enough food or if there's too much time between meals, chat with your vet about the right diet for your dog's weight and activity level.

- Boredom can also lead dogs to explore some rather unsavoury snacks. Keeping them mentally stimulated with toys and games can help curb this behaviour.
- If separation anxiety is an issue, your dog may resort to poop-eating to cope with stress. It's worth looking into solutions for their anxiety.
- And if you've recently noticed your dog raiding the cat's litter box, check if there's been a change in your home that has made access easier. Cat poop is like gourmet food for dogs, so it's best to keep that tray out of reach.



How to Put an End to It

So, how can you train your pup to stop this rather embarrassing habit? Here are some helpful tips:

- **Cleanliness is Key:** If your dog isn't house-trained yet—whether they're a puppy or an adult—make sure your home is spotless. No poop means no temptation!
- **Garden Patrol:** Check your yard and pick up any mess before letting your dog outside. The less poop around, the better!
- **Timely Cleanup:** As soon as your dog does their business, grab a bag and clean it up right away.
- **Stay Calm:** If your dog sniffs out some poop, avoid making a big fuss or showing distress. This could excite them even more and encourage them to go for it.
- **Training:** Work on their recall commands. The better you can call them back before they reach the offending poop, the easier it will be to avoid the issue. Teaching them to "leave it" can also work wonders.

If the problem persists and your dog was re-homed from Crazy Dog Lady, don't hesitate to reach out to us for assistance. For those from other sources, a vet or an Animal Behaviour and Training Council registered behaviourist can provide support.

Dealing with Cat Poop

If your dog has developed a taste for cat poop from the litter box, it can be a little trickier to manage. Cats often change their toileting habits, so keep an eye on the situation. Here are a few strategies to consider:

- **Clean Regularly:** Make it a habit to clean the litter tray frequently.
- **Out of Reach:** Move the litter box to a location that your dog can't access.
- **Creative Solutions:** Consider placing the litter box in a narrow space that only your cat can navigate, like:
 - A quiet corner with a small entrance
 - A litter box with a lid
 - A cardboard box with a cut-out for your cat but not your dog
 - A stair gate with a cat flap that only allows your cat through



Remember, if this behaviour has suddenly started or if you're worried about how much they're eating, it's best to consult your vet. Addressing the issue early on will make all the difference!