

## **Destructiveness in a multi-pet household**

Not all thieves wear a mask, striped jumper and carry a swag bag? Many pet owners could easily identify with the chaos, distress and expense caused by a villain of the piece, and some have four legs and a tail. At some time we have all returned home to find at best, something that doesn't look quite right or slightly out of place, and at the very worst a scene that replicates a student flat after a late night on the town. Upturned dustbins, ripped cushions, broken crockery, mangled furniture and curtains that have been used as a climbing frame can all be the hard work of that cute little angel, that greets us with a wag of a tail or a purr when we return home from a hard day at the office.

Destructive behaviour is probably one of the most common problems experienced by pet owners, and it isn't always the dog that should take the blame. When making accusations it is important that the finger of blame is pointed in the right direction. Imagine being accused of a crime and being sentenced to a life of blame, misery and name calling when you cannot speak up for yourself. But with a little invention, thought and planning identifying the cause, culprit and event can be as simple as A,B,C.

**A**rrange the furniture in the room to accommodate a video camera to record your animals when left.

**B**e yourself and leave the house as normal. Any changes in your routine will be noticed by your pet.

**C**amera, ensure you flick the switch before you leave the house. A video camera is the ideal tool to see exactly what goes on behind closed doors and you'll be surprised. Not only is it just dogs, but also both cats and parrots can claim their place in the hall of destructive shame. When the event is caught on camera, you are able to see if the pets are enjoying the efforts of their actions or whether they appear anxious. This will give you vital information to whether the animals are either bored or if you may need professional advice. Destructive behaviour is not only expensive, but worrying and potentially dangerous for your pet, therefore it is important to identify exactly which pet is the cause of the problem in a multi-pet household. Many events occur within moments of leaving, therefore generous exercise before leaving your pet will ensure they are relaxed and suitably tired.