

Digging

Dogs are a tenacious species, being determined, active, intelligent & resolute. An equally active and inventive mind is needed to provide the degree of stimulation necessary to prevent the onset of boredom, which is a primary reason for digging in the garden.

I would suggest that to satisfy your dog's inherent need to dig, that a small sandpit be constructed in a suitable place in the garden. The sand pit needs only be a few feet square in a very discreet area of the garden, yet deep enough to provide hours of fun. Hidden beneath the surface of the sand, a selection of rawhide chews, sterilised bones, or chew sticks can be concealed. This will direct the dog's digging to a designated area, rather than the prized rose bushes, which will now hopefully bloom.

This technique diverts the dog's attention to somewhere that is rewarding to dig, rather than adopting a random, dig-and-hope strategy. Digging is best resolved in this way, because it is otherwise dependant upon you always being in the garden with the dog to prevent it.

Dogs also dig if they have resources to excess. Digging and burying is the dog's instinctive response to saving things until later. Bones, slippers, shoes, chews and even bedding can be found in the vegetable patch or amongst the daisies. If your dog has a lot of toys or resources that he constantly taking into the garden to bury, I would adopt a new living strategy with your pet. This should involve keeping toys and other prized items away for periods of the day and brought out for play times when your dog receives 100% of your attention with these toys. After a play period the toys are removed and the dog is left with only a couple of special pacification items to prevent him from becoming bored. These play times should be regular and interesting for your dog and enjoyable.

