

Ferret Bites Wrists Of Owner

How to prevent a playful ferret from biting your wrists.

By Mary Van Dahm

Posted: April 1, 2008, 5 a.m. EDT

I have a ferret named Zoey. Most of the time she is a very sweet little girl. She loves to be picked up and held and will give me kisses when she is in my arms. She never bites my ankles or anything, like my other ferret sometimes does. I do have a problem with her, though, when I am down on my hands and knees. She will come up to me and bite my wrists, then run away! She doesn't draw blood, but it does hurt sometimes. Why does she do this, and how can I get her to stop?

Zoey may be trying to get you to play with her. "Nip and run" is a way that some ferrets say, "Tag, you're it." She may also consider you an intruder in her territory and is nipping you as a warning that you are now in her space. When you are standing and holding her, she is on your terms, but when you are down on the floor, you are on her turf.

The best thing to do is to either spray some Bitter Apple on your wrists so that you do not taste good to her or lift your hands up off the floor when you see her coming. If you have to have your hands on the floor for some reason, be sure to tell her "No!" when you see her approach your wrists. If she goes after you anyway, pick her up by the scruff, like her mom would, and tell her "No" very firmly and then set her down again. Continue doing this every time she tries to bite your wrists and she should eventually get the idea that you don't want her to do this.

Because she does not bite your ankles, try cutting the foot part off of a pair of socks and wearing just the leg part of the sock over your wrists. Tennis wristbands may work, too. If your ferret likes to go after socks, though, don't try this or you may make matters worse.

See more ferret questions and answers>>