

Nip Training Do's And Don'ts

Use these tips to help control ferret biting.

By Kim Schilling

Each ferret has a unique personality, so it's possible that everything in this list may not work for you. Be creative and flexible.

Find a method, or a combination of corrections, that works for both of you. Seek guidance from more experienced ferret caretakers for advice.

Do provide safe and fun toys for your ferret to chew on, both in its cage and out. (Nothing too small and nothing that can be bitten into pieces and ingested.)

Do use a toy instead of your hand to encourage wrestling and other play. Do use a bitter liquid bite deterrent on your hands, but items like hot sauce should be reserved only for your tacos.

Do correct your ferret immediately after a nip, using a loud, firm "No!" or "No bite!" Be consistent with your choice of words. (Effectiveness of this correction is frequently increased with a gentle, but firm, scruff. You may also throw in a loud hissing noise to further validate your point.)

Don't scream at or verbally abuse your ferret.

Don't ever hit, bite or throw your ferret. (Aggression begets aggression and will only lead to a bigger problem.)

Don't inadvertently reward your ferret for biting by giving food or setting it down to carry on playing.

Don't isolate your ferret for long periods of time.