

## Dog Gets into Mischief Alone

**Training can't happen while your dog is alone, but here are some ways to prevent her naughty, self-taught tricks.**

*By September Morn*

Q. I have an English Bulldog that loves to eat, sleep, and get into things. When nobody's looking, she will go upstairs and get into things in my mom's bedroom or the kitchen. Downstairs, she will try to get food. I am trying to find a way to train her and teach her tricks so she can be in dog shows. When someone asks her to give them her paw, she will listen whether she's getting food or not. But how do you train her tricks at home when a trainer is not there?

A. Your dog can't really learn to do tricks when there's nobody around to train her. To teach your dog tricks, you need to be there to reward her when she does what you're trying to teach her. It sounds like the problem is really that when your dog is home alone, she's teaching herself some undesirable tricks – like going places she's not supposed to be and getting into things she shouldn't touch when your family is away at work or school.

To stop her from doing those naughty self-taught tricks, you'll need to prevent her from practicing them. The best way to do that is keep her out of the kitchen and bedrooms when nobody is around. Put baby gates in the doorways of those rooms and keep them closed when you're not home. Leave several different kinds of food-puzzle toys with your dog, to keep her mind and jaws busy when she's unwatched. You can get food-puzzle toys at any good pet supply