

My Shiba Puppy Plays Too Rough

Separating a puppy from his target may be necessary to avoid harm.

By September Morn

Q. I own a 12-week-old female Shiba Inu who chews on my 7-year-old male Pomeranian every chance she gets. He is very non-aggressive. He tries to somewhat defend himself from her, but to no avail. I've tried to let them sort it out, but in the meantime I'm afraid he may have a heart attack. She really hurts him. Any advice on how to handle this when it starts?

A. Your Pomeranian is about the same size as (or smaller than) your Shiba pup, which means he's not big enough to defend himself and she probably treats him as if he were a littermate, instead of giving him the respect due an adult dog.

When one dog in the family is making life miserable for another, as is happening here, it's time to intervene. When your Shiba puppy tries to play too roughly with your Pom and refuses to heed his warnings, calmly pick up the pup and move her away from him. Do your best to engage the pup in a game with you, preferably a game that will let her expend some of that excess puppy energy PLUS engage her mind. This will give your Pom a break from the pup and let him know you'll keep him safe.

If the puppy refuses to play with you and tries to return to annoying your Pom, give her a three-to-five minute time-out in her crate (or other puppy-safe area). This will help her realize that you're not going to allow her to "bully" the older dog. When you put her in time-out, give her a couple of chew toys, so she'll have an outlet for her need to play. Often, pups become extra rowdy, bitey, and naughty when they need a nap, so if she's asleep when you return to release her from time-out, just let her stay there until she wakes on her own.