

Pick Dog Toys Carefully During Holiday Shopping

Ensure dog toys are free from choking hazards before making purchases this holiday season.

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The holiday shopping season is officially underway, and pet owners should use caution when picking out toy gifts for dogs to avoid potential hazards – particularly if dogs are left alone with their new holiday gifts.

To ensure its only enjoyment dogs receive from their new toys, pet owners should be aware of possible ingestion hazards.

“Don’t buy anything too soft where the dog could bite off pieces and swallow them,” said Mark Stickney, DVM, veterinarian at the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences at Texas A&M University. These pieces could cause a dog to choke or require surgical removal, he said

Stickney advocates rawhide chews in place of animal bones, as bones could be too hard resulting in the dog chipping his teeth. Dog owners should never give their pets cooked bones, as they could splinter and cause serious internal damage.

Pet owners should buy toys and treats appropriate for their dogs’ sizes. Safe toys are ones that dogs can easily hold in their mouths, yet large enough to avoid swallowing, he said.

Carefully examine all toys before purchasing this holiday season. If a toy proves to be harmful, notify the store it was purchased from immediately.