



## Resource Guarding in Doberman Puppies

Resource guarding is pretty rare in young puppies, although we have seen it a lot among rescued puppies; especially those taken from their litter too early. Resource guarding means the puppy is “guarding” either food, a treat, a toy, or a person. Usually, this manifests as them growling when someone tries to take it away, or get near it. Sometimes, they don’t growl, but they form protective body language around the item. At this age, by working diligently every single day, we have an opportunity to try and change the course of this behavior. When this behavior exists in adult dogs, it is very hard to change. If you are seeing this behavior in a young puppy, you must work on it NOW!

If the dog is guarding food or treats, the first thing you should always do is feed all meals by hand. Then, follow [these steps](#). Definitely work with one of our training partners to be sure you stay on top of these issues early on.

If the puppy is guarding toys or objects, take the following steps to work on this:

- Work on the Leave It, Take It game consistently. This will help them understand that they need to leave things, and that can still be a positive experience.
- If you are in a bind and they are guarding an object that you need, or want to get away from them, find another object to “trade” for.
- Even if your resource guarder is not guarding toys or objects at this time, these are great exercises to work into your routine so that nothing pops up.

Above all, contact a qualified trainer! Correcting and punishing is NOT the answer at this age.