

ROOM TO IMPROVE
My new dog chewed up a chair and is eyeing the sofa — what can I do?

Stephen Milioti

A. You might want to rethink your furnishings, starting with that sofa. One fabric you should know about is Crypton. It has a moisture barrier and is odor- and stain-resistant, so it's good in extreme pet situations. And it's as tough as it sounds.

"The fabric's been thoroughly tested to withstand puncturing much more than most mainstream fabrics, so it's great for everyday use with pets," said Randy Rubin, the co-founder and president of Crypton.

If you want to reupholster your sofa, you can buy the fabric through the company's Web site (www.cryptonfabric.com), which offers a range of colors in various textures, including twill and suede, for \$50 to \$80 a yard. Crypton also sells its own furniture. The Asher sofa (\$1,499), upholstered in woven herringbone, is a particularly good choice, because its simple, clean lines will fit many different design schemes. The company sells dog beds, designed by the likes of William Wegman or Michael Graves (\$90 to \$125), or you can design your own.

You might also reconsider your rug — if it's made of any fabric below industrial grade, it is in danger of being mauled. Bolon, an impressively sturdy floor covering, has the sleek, ultra-flat visual appeal of a leather floor covering but is made of tightly woven vinyl. The Swedish-made fabric comes in several colors and sizes, and is available through the Patterson, Flynn & Martin showroom in New York (212-688-7700).

"It's really stylish flooring that just happens to be ideal for dogs," said Todd Black, a New York-based interior designer who has two Jack Russell terriers and has recommended Bolon to his clients. Prices range from \$85 to \$110 a square yard, but it is generally available only to

the trade, so you'll likely need to go through a designer to buy it.

Mr. Black also suggested a rather surprising pet-friendly material: mohair. "It just doesn't die," he said. "It's pretty much indestructible." Another good choice is Ultrasuede, which will appeal to those who like leather but want something a little tougher. Desiron, a New York-based modern furniture company, offers its square-lined Hudson sofa and club chair in Ultrasuede (the sofa starts at \$3,380 and the chair at \$2,420; 212-353-2600 or desiron.com).

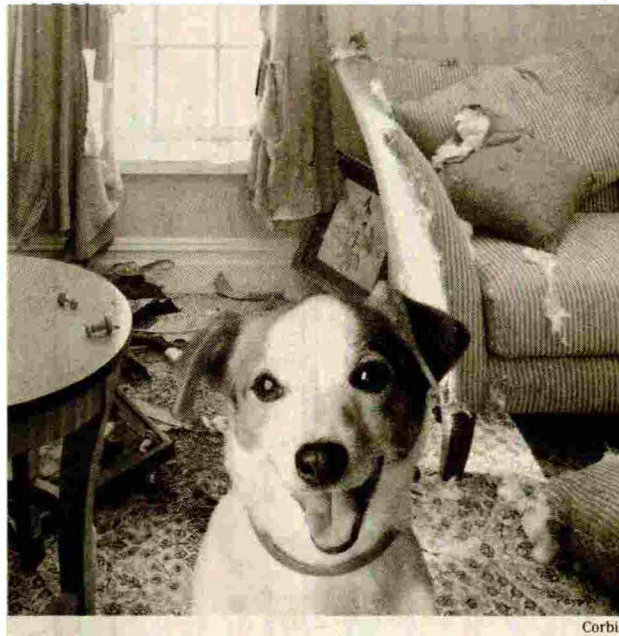
But no amount of redecoration will help if you don't look at the issue from the dog's perspective. What your dog needs is a great chew toy. The Kong dog toy (\$6 to \$15 from stores like Petco; petco.com) is made of a durable rubber compound that's extra-bouncy, and it holds

treats inside, dispensing them periodically as the dog chews and rolls the toy around (the company also sells a line of treats).

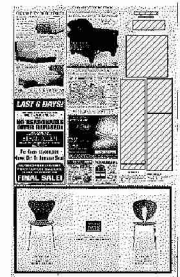
Barbara Lukowski, the president of Husky House NYC, a nonprofit organization that rescues Siberian huskies and mixed breeds, said she recommends the Kong because it keeps the dogs occupied. "Dogs chew when they're bored," she said, "particularly if they're not getting enough walks and exercise." A dog that has had enough exercise may do less damage indoors, she said, "because it will be less restless."

And if your dog is chewing your furniture, Ms. Lukowski added, the next target might be that tangle of electrical cords under your desk, so "it's crucial that you properly conceal your exposed electrical wires." Cableorganizer.com offers a good solution: wire-loom tubes (starting at 65 cents a foot) that wrap around a cluster of cables. Even if your dog chews the tube, it's much safer than gnawing the exposed wires.

Questions about décor may be sent by e-mail to room@nytimes.com. Unpublished questions cannot be answered individually.



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