**“Ouch!” Kittens that Bite**

**#1 – Find out the “Why”**

The first way to address your cat’s biting depends on why he is doing it.  It could be that he gets overzealous during play, he is bored or frustrated, or he is asking you to stop doing something but you don’t hear him. Once you know this, you can plan how to make him stop.

### #2 – Your Hand is Not a Toy

Sometimes cats get so into their play that they forget themselves. Don’t use your hand as a toy with your cat; instead use a toy that keeps your hands a safe distance from his mouth.  (For example, [Da Bird Feather Toy](http://www.go-cat.com/)).

### #3 – Stop the Play

If you think your cat actually goes after you during play and it is more than just incidental contact, call a time out.  You can do this by turning your back to him as soon as he bites and cutting off the play immediately.  Don’t speak to him or resume play for one minute.  After a few cycles of this he will get the message.

### #4 – Time Out

If that doesn’t work, you can try sending a stronger message by changing scenery.  When he bites you, stop the play, pick him up, bring him to another room, and walk away.  This will help him make a clear connection between biting and the fun times ending.

### #5 – Drain the Energy

If your cat is attacking you outside of play, he probably needs to drain some of his energy.  Spend time playing with him until you can see he is tired.  If he doesn’t seem to respond to other toys, a laser pointer is a good option.  (But don’t overuse it — for more on the merits and drawbacks, take a look at an [article](http://jacksongalaxy.com/2011/11/18/laser-toys-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/) by Jackson Galaxy.)

### #6 – Relieve the Anxiety

Sometimes cats transfer the aggression they feel toward something else to whomever may be next to them, and this can result in what seem to be vicious and unprovoked attacks.  It may help your cat’s anxiety to keep some [Feliway](http://www.feliway.com/us/) diffusers plugged in around the house.  The synthetic feline pheromone helps cats feel more secure.

### #7 – Speak to Your Vet

Your vet may be able to prescribe some food or medication to help calm your cat’s nerves.  For instance, [Hill’s Prescription Diet](http://m.hillspet.com/index.html) makes food with tryptophan to help cats relax.

### #8 – Proper Handling

Don’t reach over your cat to pet him.  While this may be acceptable to some cats, it is definitely not acceptable to others.  See if this overhead approach correlates with what seems like “out of nowhere” biting.  If so, approach the side of your cat’s face with the back of your hand to pet him, rather than going for the top of his head or his body.

### #9 – Respect His Wishes

Learn to recognize when your cat does not want to be handled and respect his wishes.  A whipping tail and huge pupils are a good start.  If he knows he can trust you to get the message, he will be less likely to bite you in general.