

## House Training Your Dog or Puppy!

House training a puppy is not difficult, but it is inconvenient. We're going to go over the process of training a puppy or an adult dog. First, a few things to think about:

If your puppy seems to be eliminating excessively, or your puppy seemed house trained and has been having accidents again, you may consider taking your pup in for a vet visit. Pups can develop urinary problems. Always rule out any chance of a physical problem before you look at anything behaviorally, especially if your adult dog was house trained.

Your goal in training your pup is to try your very best to **prevent mistakes**. Every time your pup eliminates outside, that's one less time he will go inside. Take it one day at a time.

Write everything down. I know this is a bit laborious, but within 7-10 days you will see a pattern of elimination evolve. Pups, like people, like routine and schedules. They will adjust to any schedule you put them on, within reason. If you write down every time you feed your dog, water your dog, take them out, when they urinate and defecate, you will see a pattern emerge. It is important to feed at that same time daily.

If you free feed your dog, you make it much more difficult to house train. If your dog nibbles throughout the day, he will potty throughout the day. Conversely, when your pup fills up, he will be more likely to eliminate more predictably.

Start here. Your pup must be in one of three places when you house train: outside under supervision, inside under supervision, or in a crate.

**1. Outside under supervision.** Many people put their pups outside for 20 minutes while they make breakfast or get ready for work. They assume the puppy will take care of business. Have you ever watched a puppy outside? They get very easily distracted. Also, many pups (especially in the morning) eliminate 2-3 times before they are done. When your pup is outside:

- Use the same door.
- Take them him to the same place every time. The odors are there.
- Don't stare at your pup.
- Praise quietly for elimination. Be careful not to startle them.

What if he doesn't go? Bring him in, put him in the kennel, and wait 5-10 minutes. Or keep him on a leash so he can't wander away from you. Try again. Sometimes a puppy will want to run around and move her body before eliminating. If you do not have a fenced yard, try using a long line instead of a regular leash. Dogs who feel

tethered do not feel they have the freedom to move. Once your pup is leash trained, it will be easier.

A special word about leash walks: if you walk your dog for potty training, please think about letting your dog have a nice long sniff walk after a potty break. If you take the dog right back inside after he goes, they can hold it a long time because they don't want to go back inside right away.

## **2. Inside the house under supervision.**

Gate off parts of the house – you must restrict access at first.

Don't stare at your pup. It can make them feel uncomfortable, especially if you are frustrated.

Learn your pup's signals. Most sniff, try to move toward the door, walk away from people or toys when they need to go outside.

If your pup goes in front of you, it's imperative that you don't punish him. If you yell at your dog, they will feel unsafe and refuse to eliminate in front of you again. This is why so many dogs move away from people and potty behind the couch and refuse to go in front of you outside. They are scared of getting punished.

Please remember, these puppies are babies. They are learning the ways of your household. Dogs do not do things because they are angry or vengeful. They just don't.

## **3. In a crate or confinement area.**

Crates should not be seen as places of entrapment

Play crate "games".

Bedding – yes or no? If your crate does not have a slick tray, you can provide bedding, as long as your pup is not urinating on it. Otherwise, leave it out. If you have a slick tray, you'll need to provide some type of traction in the kennel. I like to wear an old T-shirt for a day and put that in the kennel. It can help dogs feel more comfortable if they have your scent in the kennel with them.

### **Nighttime confinement vs. daytime confinement**

Please don't get confused about the length of time a puppy can stay in the kennel.

Dogs, like us, can go much longer without potty breaks when they are sleeping.

Many puppies sleep through the night fairly quick, even young pups. I don't recommend setting an alarm and waking them up to go outside. You're teaching the puppy to wake up on a schedule. Instead, have the puppy in the bedroom with you so you can hear if she wakes up. If she does, take her out, let her eliminate, and put her right back to bed.

### **How long can you leave your puppy in a crate?**

With young puppies, 8-11 weeks, leaving them in the crate more than a couple of hours at most can be a problem. If you go to work all day, you'll need to find someone that will let your puppy out so he doesn't end up with health issues, such as a bladder infection, UTI, etc.

### **More tips**

Large breed dogs are easier to house train in general. They get big fast. It can take much longer to potty train a small breed dog. You'll need to be patient.

Socially isolating a puppy for 8-10 hours during the day can cause psychological problems. They need socialization and interaction with people.

Many breeders use wee wee pads. This is a bad idea. It literally teaches them to potty inside the house and the wrong substrate to eliminate on. If you want your puppy to go potty outside, puppies need to start there at about 5 weeks. Once they get in the habit of going inside on pads, it is very difficult to teach a pup to go outside. You will have to be more diligent and patient if this is what your puppy was taught.

Start by putting a pad outside if your dog wants to go on the pads. Once they are going on the pad outside, start cutting it smaller and smaller over time. Eventually, you will have a small piece, and at that point it's easy to transfer to grass.

Sod – some pups don't like to get wet in the grass, especially some smaller dogs. Put some dry sod in a kiddie pool on a covered porch and that can sometimes help with house training.

Another option is to take your dog into the yard where there is pine straw. Many dogs will use pine straw because it's drier than morning grass. You'll have to experiment and see what your dog likes.

### **When should you let your pup out?**

- When they wake up
- When they come out of the crate
- Just after they eat or drink
- When they stop chewing and get up
- When he walks away from play area
- When sniffing
- Go to previous places where they have had an accident
- Looks distracted
- Won't take a treat
- Wanders to the vicinity of the door or gate
- Whines
- Every 15-20 minutes with a young pup

**What if my puppy has an accident?**

Dogs live in the moment. If you catch them in the act, interrupt and take them to finish outside. If you do not see it, you can't do anything about it.

**NEVER PUNISH YOUR PUPPY!!**

Cleaning up - Use an enzymatic cleaner such as Nature's Miracle. These cleaners will completely eliminate the odor.

Carpet - If your dog urinates on carpet or other absorbent surfaces, and you don't use enough of the enzymatic cleaner, your dog will still smell the urine. For heavy elimination, you'll need to saturate the liquid down into the carpet to eliminate the entire smell. Always test the surface you are cleaning to make sure it doesn't stain.

What if they look "guilty"? Dogs don't feel guilt. They do, however, show appeasement gestures, which are signs they are trying to avoid conflict. They are responding to your voice or body language that feels threatening. Again, they are not having accidents on purpose.