

BASIC HOUSETRAINING TECHNIQUES

Housetraining is not only possible, it is also easy because of the natural instinct of dogs to relieve themselves away from their living quarters. The use of a pet crate makes the whole process go more smoothly. A pet crate has the additional advantage of protecting your home from the potential destructive behavior of a curious puppy, as well as minimizing chances of the puppy injuring him/herself.

1. Feed your puppy 3-4 meals of a high quality commercial pet food daily. Consistency in feeding times makes the times of elimination more predictable.. Make the last feeding no later than 6 PM. Removing water at 8 PM may be helpful for the first month or two.

2. Confine the puppy in a crate all the time it is not under your *direct* supervision. The crate should be large enough for the puppy to stand up and turn around, but not so big as to have extra room in which an elimination can occur. If you choose to buy a larger crate, place something in the back part of the crate to make it smaller while the puppy is smaller. A key point: Do not give it an opportunity to have an accident. Do not show the puppy any attention while in the crate. Talking to the puppy, sticking your finger into the crate door, or even yelling at the puppy trains the puppy to whine, bark, etc. to get that attention. Totally avoiding the puppy's actions in the crate will soon lead to the puppy learning to be quiet.

3. When you take the puppy out of the crate, immediately take it outside. If it refuses to "do it's business" after 5 minutes outside, put it back in the crate for 5 minutes and repeat the procedure. The puppy soon learns that its *reward* for "doing it's business" is to stay out of the crate.

4. Select one toilet area for your puppy. Take your puppy to the area at times it is most likely to need to eliminate: right after sleeping, soon after eating, etc. in the beginning, it is advisable to take the puppy out every 2 hours if possible. *Always provide the puppy the opportunity to go outside to eliminate just before being put back in the crate.* Always take the puppy outside *immediately* after returning home before the excitement causes an accident. When you get to the area and your puppy begins to sniff around for the right spot, use a phrase such as "hurry up," or "do your business." Soon that phrase will result in an elimination.

5. Praise your puppy immediately after he has eliminated in the right area.

6. Even if you are doing everything right, accidents will happen. If you catch your puppy in the act, clap your hands to startle him and say "No!" Immediately take him to the area you have designated as a toilet area. If he then eliminates in the toilet area, praise him for doing a good job. If you find an accident, do not raise your voice, spank your puppy, or rub his nose in it. While you will certainly make him afraid, it won't be because of the accident, but will only make it afraid of you.

7. Keep a record of elimination times. Most all puppies will be "regular." They will go at the same time, every time, after eating. Most puppies will eliminate within 5 minutes after eating. Once you have learned the specific time for your specific puppy, you will have a good idea at what time you should routinely take the puppy outside. This is particularly valuable to know during inclement weather.

8. Use products that neutralize urine odor when cleaning up accidents. We can recommend products we feel work best. Avoid products with ammonia, as it is a natural component found in urine and the smell may actually attract the puppy to urinate in that location.

9. Remember, BE PATIENT. Housetraining should be complete by 4-6 months of age. However, it is still advisable to keep the pet in the crate when you are away from home, for several months after your complete training, to prevent possible destructive behaviors.

10. Remember that your puppy needs plenty of play and exercise when out of the crate.