

HOUSETRAINING

Housetraining is a tremendously important part of every puppy's life. It is also an area which abounds with misinformation and old wives' tales. Because housetraining is one of the first lessons you will be teaching your puppy, it sets the stage for future training. To avoid undermining your relationship before you've really had a chance to establish it, it is important that house training not be punitive or traumatic.

Before you begin housetraining your puppy, keep the following in mind: prior to the age of three to four months a puppy does not have the ability to control their bladder for very long. Just because your puppy can last through the night does not mean they can make it through the day as the body's functions slow down at night.

Generally, puppies need to go out as soon as they wake (even from a short nap), after eating and drinking, during or after play and exciting, chewing, or just because it's been a while since they've last gone.

The following page outlines a positive approach to housetraining which will greatly facilitate this aspect of your pup's training and will minimize clean ups!



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- Feed at set times. Don't vary your schedule (even on weekends).
- Feed one diet and do not vary it. Do not feed table scraps or varieties of treats during the housetraining period.
- Watch your puppy's stools to make sure they are well formed. If they are loose you may be overfeeding.
- Have your veterinarian do a stool check for worms, and if your puppy has worms follow their treatment recommendation to get rid of them.
- Take your puppy outside on a regular schedule. Go outside with them and praise when they go outside.
- When you take your puppy outside, go straight to one spot and stand there. Don't walk around, teach your pup this is the time and place to go!
- If you catch your puppy in the act inside, say "stop!" and take them outside to your designated spot. When they go there - praise!
- When your puppy does have an accident in the house, clean it with a cleaner designed for urine odour or with vinegar and water. Do not use an ammonia based cleaner as urine contains ammonia and may attract your puppy back to that spot again.
- Keep a chart of exactly what your puppy does at what time. You will notice a pattern and be able to better plan a schedule for going outside.
- If you don't catch your puppy in the act, but come across an accident all there is to do is clean it up. It will do no good to be upset with your puppy.

Sample Housetraining Schedule

6:30 am

Walk, feed and water

12:00 pm

Walk, feed, water and
walk

5:00 pm

Walk, feed, water and
walk

7:00 pm

Water and walk

Bedtime

Walk

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Under no circumstances should you ever show your puppy, scold your puppy or, worst of all, rub your puppy's nose in an accident. This does not facilitate housetraining. This will undermine your relationship with your puppy, is unsanitary and cruel. Dogs punished in this manner may become housetrained, but in spite of punishment, not because of it. Dogs are generally quite clean and will try to go outside once they are physically able and understand it is what you desire. It does not have to be an unpleasant experience for either of you.

Using this approach to housetraining, your attitude should be one of patience and positive thinking. If anything goes wrong - treat it as though it is your fault! You didn't watch closely enough, you didn't get your pup outside soon enough after a nap, or you didn't recognize the signs they were giving you that they needed to go out.

If you can't supervise your puppy, you should confine them. We recommend crate training in a small cage where your pup has enough room to stand up, turn around and lay down. This is your puppy's den and they will be reluctant to soil it. If they do, do not punish them.

When your puppy is loose in the house, keep them in an area you can have your eyes on them! This way if they give you any signs they need to go out - you'll see them. Immediately after a successful potty trip you may provide more access to the house knowing an accident is less likely.

