

Necessary Supplies

- ID Tag
- Quality Food
- Chew Toys
- Collar & Leash
- Food & Water Bowls
- Size-Appropriate Crate

Preparing the Crate

Vari-Kennel type: Take the crate apart, removing the screws, the top and the door. Allow your pup to go in and out of the bottom half of the crate before attaching the top half. This stage can require anywhere from several hours to a few days. This step can be omitted in the case of a young puppy who accepts crating right away.

Wire Mesh type: Tie the crate door back so that it stays open without moving or shutting closed. If the crate comes with a floor pan, place a piece of cardboard or a towel between the floor (or crate bottom) and the floor pan in order to keep it from rattling.

Furnishing Your Puppy's Crate

Toys and Treats: Place your puppy's favorite toys and dog treats at the far end opposite the door opening. These toys may include the "Tuffy", "Billy", "Kong", "Nylabone" or a ball. Toys and baits should always be inedible and large enough to prevent their being swallowed. Any fragmented toys should be removed to prevent choking and internal obstruction. You may also place a sterilized marrow bone filled with cheese or dog treats in the crate.

Water: A small hamster-type water dispenser with ice water should be attached to the crate if your puppy is to be confined for more than two hours in the crate.

Bedding: Place a towel or blanket inside the crate to create a soft, comfortable bed for the puppy. If the puppy chews the towel, remove it to prevent the pup from swallowing or choking on the pieces. Although most puppies prefer lying on soft bedding, some may prefer to rest on a hard, flat surface, and may push the towel to one end of the crate to avoid it. If the puppy urinates on the towel, remove bedding until the pup no longer eliminates in the crate.

Location of Crate

Whenever possible, place the crate near or next to you when you are home. This will encourage the pup to go inside it without his feeling lonely or isolated when you go out. A central room in the apartment (i.e.: living room or kitchen) or a large hallway near the entrance is a good place to crate your puppy.



House & Crate training

The Golden Rule of Housetraining is...

NEVER let an un-housetrained dog out of your sight while the dog is inside! Every time a dog relieves himself inside, it teaches him that it is OK to go inside. An un-housetrained dog should be either: (1) inside, under your supervision; (2) outside; or (3) in a crate. If you follow these rules of housetraining, your dog should be housetrained in only a week or two. And, yes, adult dogs can be housetrained! It is often easier with adults.

Dogs are clean animals and always prefer to keep their home clean. Your dog wants to do the right thing once he knows what it is. You must show your dog the preferred spot for eliminating outside!

The best method of house training is the crate method (Click here for an idea of what a typical day of crate training is like.) Buy a pet carrier or cage only big enough for the dog to stand up, turn around, and lay down in. This will be the dog's "den" and sleeping place. It goes against a dog's instinct to foul his sleeping place. Even young puppies will try their best not to go inside their crate.

On the dog's first day home, let him wander in and out of the crate at will. Place a blanket or towel in the crate along with some dog treats and toys. Let him get the idea that the kennel is his own private room. Put it where it's out of the way, yet where the dog is near the family and can watch what is going on.

Young puppies must be taken outside many times a day. Young puppies need to eliminate within 30 minutes of playing, eating, sleeping, drinking or exercising. Older dogs need to go out four or more times daily. Always take the dog to the SAME spot outdoors to relieve himself. The smell will remind him why he's there.

When puppy relieves himself outside, PRAISE him, "Good Dog!!" and give him a treat. Praise for good behavior is the key to housetraining! A dog will quickly associate going outside with treats, and will be eager to relieve himself outside.

If you're inside and notice the dog starting to sniff and circle, quickly grab him up or encourage him to go outside. If you catch him in mid-stream, startle the pup with a noise, and then take him outside. Stay to praise him if he finishes.

What if you notice a mess on the floor but didn't see your dog do it? Just clean up the mess without scolding the dog. Dogs are not able to associate past mistakes with a correction from you. You must catch the dog in the act for your correction to be effective. Rubbing the dogs' nose in the mess or hitting him with a newspaper will just shame him and lead him to relieve himself in hidden places inside.

Use a cleaner that will kill smells and bacteria, such as Simple Green (grocery stores), Nature's Miracle (pet stores), or vinegar and water. If you don't thoroughly clean up the spot, the dog might return to that spot and the smell might make him feel the urge to go inside.

Remember, dogs don't like to foul their den. At bedtime, take puppy outside and then lock him in his crate for the night. He'll make an effort not to foul his bed. Then take him outside first thing in the morning. Some young puppies may not have the muscle control to hold it all night and will have to be taken out during the night.

Don't feed your dog after about 6:00 pm. This will help the dog to make it through the night with no accidents.

Dogs can be left in a crate up to 4-6 hours. Dogs should not be left in a crate for more than 8 hours. If you cannot come home during the day while housetraining, consider leaving the dog outside to prevent accidents inside.

Some tips to make housetraining easier: Hang a jingle bell on the door and jingle it when you go outside to the bathroom. Your dog should learn to ring the bell when he needs to go outside.

Crate training

Crate training can be an efficient and effective way to house train a dog. Dogs do not like to soil their resting/sleeping quarters if given adequate opportunity to eliminate elsewhere. Temporarily confining your dog to a small area strongly inhibits the tendency to urinate and defecate.

However, there is still a far more important aspect of crate training.

If your dog does not eliminate while she is confined, then she will need to eliminate when she is released, i.e., she eliminates when you are present to reward and praise her.

Be sure to understand the difference between temporarily confining your dog to a crate and long term confinement when you are not home. The major purpose of confinement when you are not home is to restrict mistakes to a small protected area. The purpose of crate training is quite the opposite. Short term confinement to a crate is intended to inhibit your dog from eliminating when confined, so that she will want to eliminate when released from confinement and taken to an appropriate area. Crate training also helps teach your dog to have bladder and bowel control. Instead of going whenever she feels like it, she learns to hold it and go at convenient scheduled times.

Crate training should not be abused; otherwise the problem will get drastically worse. The crate is not intended as a place to lock up the dog and forget her for extended periods of time. If your dog soils her crate because you left her there too long, the house training process will be set back several weeks, if not months.

Your dog should only be confined to a crate when you are at home. Except at night, give your dog an opportunity to relieve herself every hour. Each time you let her out, put her on leash and immediately take her outside. Once outside, give her about three to five minutes to produce. If she does not eliminate within the allotted time period, simply return her to her crate. If she does perform, then immediately reward her with praise, food treats, affection, play, an extended walk and permission to run around and play in your house for a couple of hours. For young pups, after 45 minutes to an hour, take her to her toilet area again.

Never give your dog free run of your home unless you know without a doubt that her bowels and bladder are empty.

During this crate training procedure, keep a diary of when your dog eliminates. If you have her on a regular feeding schedule, she should soon adopt a corresponding elimination schedule. Once you know what time of day she usually needs to eliminate, you can begin taking her out only at those times instead of every hour. After she has eliminated, she can have free, but supervised, run of your house. About one hour before she needs to eliminate (as calculated by your diary) put her in her crate. This will prevent her from going earlier than you had planned. With your consistency and abundance of rewards and praise for eliminating outside, she will become more reliable about holding it until you take her out. Then the amount of time you confine her before her scheduled outing can be reduced, then eliminated.

Mistakes and Accidents During Training

If you ever find an accident in the house, just clean it up. Do not punish your dog. All this means is that you have given her unsupervised access to your house too soon. Until she can be trusted, don't give her unsupervised free run of your house. If mistakes and accidents occur, it is best to go back to the crate training. You need to more accurately predict when your dog needs to eliminate and she needs more time to develop bladder and bowel control.

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