

Housetraining your Puppy

Basic Training

The best and most reliable way to train your puppy is *to provide frequent opportunity to eliminate in an appropriate place and to reward this behavior immediately as it occurs*. Walk your puppy on a leash at regular intervals and at least twice each day. The direct housetraining method requires you be nearby and to start good lifetime habits from the beginning. Other methods may seem easier and may appear to demand less initial investment of time. The direct training method, however, is sure to save you time and energy in the long run.

- Puppies require frequent walks usually until they reach 6 months of age.
- Take your puppy out within several minutes after each meal and each nap.
- Feed your puppy at scheduled mealtimes and avoid snacks between feedings.
- If your puppy is too young to walk on a leash, carry it outside to an enclosed, safe area.
- When the pup prepares to eliminate, begin praising it in a happy and light tone.
- As your dog eliminates, pleasantly say something like "hurry" or "do it" and give abundant praise. This teaches the pup to void on command.
- Never paper-train your puppy. You may unintentionally teach your pup that is acceptable to eliminate inside your house.
- Don't punish your puppy for "accidents" that occur in your home. A punishment is not helpful in housetraining and no matter how frustrated you may be, concentrate on the steps to prevent another accident.

Crate Training

Crate training *is based on the premise that puppies are unlikely to eliminate in or near an area used for rest*. This method works well for owners who cannot continually remain nearby to bring the puppy directly outside as described for above. *This method works well for some dogs, but not for all*. Some pups do not tolerate this type of confinement and become agitated and excessively vocal. If the pup initially objects to being closed in the crate, you will encourage undesirable attention-seeking behavior, such as barking or whining, by visiting or otherwise comforting the crated pup. Wait a few moments until it is quiet and calm before checking that all is well. This way, you will not encourage undesirable behavior nor will you defeat the potential usefulness of the crate.

- Select a crate that will accommodate your dog at its anticipated adult size.
- The pup should be able to comfortably stand and turn to change positions in its crate.
- Associate the crate with positive things, such as food and safe shelter.
- Begin by leaving the door open until there is no sign of fear.
- The crate is your dog's special place where it much never be disturbed or threatened.
- The crate must not be linked with punishment or your dog will avoid it.
- Encourage your pup to use the crate as a resting-place
- Teach your dog to willingly leave the crate on your command, using a simple "come" in a happy tone of voice.
- Never reach in and pull your dog out of the crate.
- Never place your pup in the crate or try to remove it from the crate when you are angry.

The Umbilical Cord Method

This method is *best used with the other techniques detailed above*. Attach your pup to a long leash that is tied to your wrist or waist. This way the pup cannot wander away to have an undetected "accident" and you can anticipate the pup's need to void. This method may be applied as an alternative to overnight crating or isolation in another part of the home. While some pups may have accidents where they sleep, they may be less anxious when their owners are nearby and this may positively affect their behavior.