

HOUSETRAINING YOUR PUPPY

Housetraining – helping your new puppy learn not to eliminate inside the home and crate are essential goals for all new puppy owners. Want the quickest success? Get a crate! This is the best tool to assist in housetraining your new puppy. In addition to having the right tools, establishing a timeline to follow will make housetraining as routine as clockwork.

Puppy Housetraining Timeline

Wake up!

- Each day begins the same for you and your puppy. When the alarm clock goes off, get up and get your puppy out of his crate and outside to do his business.
- Keeping the crate in or near your bedroom lets you hear a whimper, whine or restlessness if he needs to go out during the night.
- When he is still little, you may be able to get him out of the crate and carry him outside. This will prevent him from stopping and eliminating on the way to the door. This is also helpful for the puppy who is not completely collar and leash trained.
- Establish this routine early in the puppy's life, as it will last a lifetime.

After meals

- Another morning ritual is breakfast. After you take him out to potty, he will be ready for his first meal of the day. Try to keep this scheduled about the same time each day. This will aid in identifying a regular and predictable elimination schedule. Each puppy is unique, so you will have to learn *this* puppy's schedule.
- After the meal wait 5 – 30 minutes to take your puppy outside. The younger the puppy the sooner after a meal you should take him out to potty. As your puppy matures, he will gain bladder control and be able to hold it longer each day.
- Most puppies eat 3 – 4 meals a day when they are growing, so following this routine after each meal is key. Most puppies will have to poop after meals.
- Watch when he drinks large amounts of water. If your puppy drinks a big bowl of water, treat this just like a meal, and take him out to potty soon afterwards.

After Playtime and Naps

Playtimes and naps will also stimulate your puppy's need to potty.

- Naps are similar to getting up in the morning routine and the body is stimulated to eliminate. Make sure that when your puppy is sleeping either in his crate or out on the floor while you are watching TV at night, for example, that you take him outside the moment he wakes up.
- The stimulation of the digestive tract brought on by playtime will also give him the urge to potty.

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- Other clues that your puppy needs to go out include sniffing the floor or carpet, circling, wandering around the house, especially in rooms far away from the family, and whimpering. If you see any of these signs, take him out immediately!

Praise for Potty

Now that you know *when* you are taking your puppy out to potty, *what* will you do to establish the right routine?

- Find a spot that will become the “potty area” and take him on leash to the same area each time. The location should be relatively uninteresting to the puppy. Some puppies become so distracted and stimulated by the outdoor environment that they seemingly forget to take care of business and potty as soon as you go back inside. This process helps to ensure the desired outcome.
- As you approach the area, give him a cue to “Go potty” then wait for results. Walk quietly around this area, paying very little obvious attention to him, till he potties.
- Praise lavishly for results and give him a yummy treat.
- After your puppy has pottied, it is time for play and freedom. Unclip the leash and allow him the freedom to play.
- Repeat this every time you are outside and soon enough your puppy will understand that doing his business as a result of your prompting will bring him lots of praise and rewards.
- Avoid establishing a routine of taking your puppy inside immediately after eliminating. If your puppy begins to associate the end of fun with eliminating, he may wait longer and longer to potty.
- Many owners have great results by also placing a bell on the door handle where they always go out to potty. Puppies can be taught to ring the bell each time they want to go out.
- If there are accidents indoors, *do not punish your puppy*, simply clean up the mess and ignore the puppy. If you catch him in the act, interrupt him. Say “Go outside” and pick him up to finish his business outdoors.

Leaving Home and Last Call

- When you have to leave home for several hours and your puppy needs to stay in a crate during the day, plan ahead.
- Use the month + 1 rule. Take the age of your puppy in months; add one and that is the maximum number of hours that your puppy should be able to comfortably go between potty breaks. A 3-month-old puppy could be expected to stay in his crate four hours without a mess.
- Several hours before bedtime, remove the water bowl. If your puppy is very thirsty, you may allow him a few laps of water.
- As with the morning routine, the last thing to do before retiring for the night is to allow your puppy one last potty break.

By scheduling meals, walks, playtime and other activities in a daily routine, you and your puppy will be your way to success in housetraining.

Good luck!