

CRATE POTTY TRAINING

The reason that the crate is so effective for potty training is:

DOGS DO NOT WANT TO MESS IN THEIR NEST!

If they think it is their space, they won't urinate there.

*****Make the crate a POSITIVE place.** Never use it as a source of punishment. You want them to **LIKE** their crate.

Dogs are naturally den/burrowing animals, and if the crate is used as a positive, comfortable, and safe resting place, most dogs will grow to love it.

Here's how to accomplish that:

Start by feeding them in their crate. This builds positive associations with their crate. Use your most excited voice to say, "Kennel up" or "In your crate," and place their food or a treat inside. Do not close the door. Slowly acclimate them to the crate.

Once they are willingly going in for their food or treat, close the door for just a matter of seconds, praise them and treat them while they are in the crate.

Do **NOT** let them out if they are barking. This will train them to bark when they want to be released from their crate. Only let them out when they are calm and quiet.

When you can't be watching your dog, until they are fully potty trained, they should be in a crate that is just big enough for them to walk in, turn around and lay down.

If the crate is too big, the dog may urinate/poo in one corner and lay in another.

*****DO NOT LEAVE THE DOG IN THE CRATE FOR AN INHUMANE AMOUNT OF TIME.** They are pack animals and being left alone or ignored for long periods of time is very stressful for them.

If you are using the crate humanely, and letting them out often to exercise, play and snuggle, then relax. You probably used a crib for your baby when you could not be supervising them, for their own safety.

Keep in mind: A dog that is unsupervised may not only be having accidents all over your house, which becomes a hard habit to break, but he/she could also be chewing/ingesting things that are dangerous for them.

Crate time can be drastically reduced once nearly/fully potty trained.

*****At night, you will need to set an alarm and let them out to potty.** As a puppy, they will need to go out about every 3 hours for awhile.

If they are laying in their urine/poo, they cannot physically hold it that long. Do **NOT** scold him/her as

having to lay in their mess is stressful enough for a dog.

The only dogs that are okay laying in their urine/feces is a puppy mill dog that had no other choice, or a dog that has a bladder infection or some other physical problem.

So, if this happens it is either a medical problem beyond their control, or an error on your part as to how long they can hold their bladder/bowels. Simply clean up the mess and let them out earlier next time or if the problem continues, consult your vet.

Be sure to set a timer to remind yourself to let the dog out to potty.

Go outside immediately after letting out of crate.

If the dog gets so excited to see you that it piddles, this is submissive urination and should not be corrected.

You may just need to carry the crate out to ensure the pottying is done on the grass.

PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE AND TREAT WHEN THE DOG POTTIES OUTSIDE!!!!!!

*****IT IS MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE TO TEACH A DOG WHERE IT SHOULD GO POTTY, AND HEAVILY REWARD THAT, THAN TO PUNISH THE DOG FOR WHERE IT SHOULD NOT GO POTTY.**

After all, how would your dog know that it's supposed to go outside?

IT IS MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE TO TEACH A DOG WHAT TO DO THAN WHAT NOT TO DO.

*****A puppy will have accidents. The key is to try to have as many successes as possible. The more potty breaks you witness outside and reward, the faster the process will go. It is scientifically proven that BEHAVIORS THAT GET REWARDED INCREASE.**

Harsh punishment/scolding is not only an ineffective and inhumane way to train, but it is unnecessary.

If you catch the dog pottying in the house, you can say a firm, sharp, "Eh!!!" and quickly rush them outside. If they finish the job outside, praise and treat.

If you don't catch them in the act, do NOT scold, do NOT rub their nose in it, etc. Simply clean it up calmly. Dogs live in the present. If they had the accident minutes ago, they do not fully understand why you are unhappy and they become scared or neurotic. It SEEMS like they know, but it has been scientifically proven that they are reacting to your tone and body language in fear, not guilt over their puddle or pile.

Scolding them, without them having a clear sense of what the offense was, creates a nervous and fearful dog (no way to live), and does not build the ideal human-dog bond.

Usually dogs go through a routine of sniffing, circling or pacing. If you see this, get them outside asap.

*****DO NOT GIVE DOG UNSUPERVISED ACCESS TO YOUR HOUSE.**

If they've just pottied, go ahead and gate off an area and let them roam within an area you can keep an eye on them.

It is best to keep the dog off carpeted areas. Not only are they more likely to urinate/poo on carpeted areas, but it is VERY difficult to remove all odor.

Again, it is best to keep dogs off carpets until they are completely potty trained. Any accidents on carpets, rugs, etc. need to be cleaned with a special carpet cleanser that neutralizes the odor. I recommend Oreck's No Return.

Dogs have a reflex that triggers them to urinate on spots they've urinated before, so failing to completely remove and neutralize the odor will make it extremely difficult to potty train your dog.

Have your dog fixed as early as your vet recommends. This will prevent them from the habit of marking his territory. This is different than simply urinating. This is where the dog lifts his leg and lets out just a little urine.

Again, your dog will have accidents, but remember: For every time your dog has an accident inside, you need to reward it about 8-10 successful times to undo the damage from one indoor accident.

So, it is **up to you** to set the dog up on a schedule for success so that it never even gets the chance to potty when you aren't looking. You must have your dog within your line of sight when you're home, or put it in a crate.

*****The biggest mistake people make is giving their dog too much unsupervised time/access to their home.**

Once you feel the dog is ready to have more free time in safe, gated area, GIVE YOUR DOG A WAY TO COMMUNICATE THAT IT NEEDS TO GO OUTSIDE.

I recommend hanging a bell on the doorknob and bumping the dog's nose to the bell, while excitedly saying "Let's potty."

Once your dog has the habit of going outside and you have given him/her a gated area to roam (not carpet), they should nose the bell when they need to go.

At first, dogs may overuse the bell a little. They will learn that ringing it sends you running (and they love attention from you), and it gets them outside and ends with a treat.

Personally, I would rather get interrupted every 20 minutes than deal with the clean up of accidents.

I had a dog that would ring the bell often and proudly drop one drip and look at me like, "It was a legit potty! Where's my treat?"

Eventually, as exhausting as potty training, etc. can be, you will look back and laugh at all the puppy chaos and be thankful you did positive, reinforcing behaviors, rather than yell and scold.

Eventually the bell/potting/treat routine will lose its novelty and it will just become a habit/urge to get outside to do its business.

Remember, the key to dog training is:

*******BEHAVIORS THAT GET REWARDED INCREASE!*******

For a much more detailed explanation of this, I suggest reading, "Don't Shoot the Dog," by Karen Pryor. The book will not only be a valuable tool for dog training, but the behavioral training techniques are effective for people and other animals as well.

Here's to happy hounds!!!