

HOUSETRAINING

1. Constant supervision is the key to successful housetraining. Keep the puppy with you at all times, within eyesight.
2. If you are unable to supervise, a crate can be a useful tool. The crate creates a den concept. Dogs instinctively are reluctant to soil their living areas. If you have purchased an adult-sized crate, it may be necessary to partition it for your puppy so that he will not do his business at one end and sleep at the other. Use the crate even if you are just leaving the room for a few moments. *This is when most accidents occur!*
3. Take the pup out to your chosen elimination area after sleeping, eating or playing. If suddenly your pup goes to another room or towards a corner of the room he is in, moving with a purpose and begins to sniff, this is usual doggie pre-elimination behaviour. Take him outside.
4. Be a clock watcher!! Know your pups "safe window" and don't exceed it until he is reliable. Start with short intervals between bathroom trips then gradually lengthen with success. If you are finding accidents, you should shorten the time between bathroom breaks.
5. It is vital that you *witness* elimination. Never assume the pup has done his business just because of time spent outside. He could have been sitting patiently by the door waiting to come in without ever leaving the step!
6. Make sure you allow adequate time for sniffing and investigation. Most pups will perform within the first 5 to 10 minutes. If puppy does not eliminate, return inside and nonchalantly put him in his crate. Wait 15 minutes and try again. Continue until successful and then praise enthusiastically.
7. Repeat a cue word or phrase (such as "hurry up" or "go pee") to encourage elimination. When he performs, praise softly. The pup will begin to make the association and eventually you will have elimination behaviour under verbal control.
8. Do not encourage play until he has completed his business. Be boring. After pup has performed, reward him in some fashion. If you have a pup that only wants to return inside, then in you go! If your puppy craves a round of fetch or play, then let the games begin! Positive reinforcement is a powerful tool.
9. *Do not punish the pup for accidents that occur unseen.* The action of elimination and the punishment are separated by too much time for the puppy to relate one to the other, even if only 1-2 minutes have passed before your discovery.

Only if you actively witness a mistake should you react. A loud "outside!" or "hey!" can startle and interrupt the pup. Quickly take him outside to the appropriate location. ***Never rub a puppy's nose in an accident!!***

10. Do not free feed your puppy, i.e., leaving the dish down for a puppy to graze whenever he chooses. Have a feeding schedule. A full stomach needs to be emptied 5-20 minutes after eating. Free feeding is also a poor choice from a training and behaviour viewpoint. You are giving a young pup total control over a very important resource. Your dog should respect and look to you for the necessities of life.
11. Do not restrict water for house training purposes. If you are having great difficulty with nighttime accidents, you could consider picking up the water dish an hour or two before bedtime.

GUIDELINES:

- At 6-8 weeks puppies begin to develop surface and location preferences for elimination.
- Puppies can be humanely crated ***during the day*** for one hour per month of life, e.g., a three month old pup can be crated for three hours, **to a maximum of four hours on an occasional basis**. Over crating a dog on a daily basis for an excessive amount of time can create other severe behaviour problems.
- A pup that is 8–10 weeks old can to be crated at night for approximately six hours without needing to eliminate.
- Most puppies are reliably housetrained by 14-20 weeks of age!!
- Remember, patience is a virtue.