

Toilet training

How to toilet train your puppy

- Give your puppy every opportunity to go to the toilet outside (or where you want him to go)
- Go outside with your puppy and give a treat and quiet praise as soon as he finishes
- Your puppy will generally need to eliminate after play, eating and resting.
- Teach your puppy to toilet on command by teaching them a cue. Say your cue word (e.g. toilet, hurry up, potty) as they're going to the toilet and mark and reward as they're finishing.
- A puppy's age in months + 1-2 = the amount of hours they can hold. e.g. 3 month old puppy's max holding time is 4-5 hours.

How to deal with accidents

- If you catch your puppy eliminating somewhere you feel is inappropriate, remain calm. Sometimes simply scooping up your puppy and taking him outside to the appropriate area can be helpful, but be careful not to frighten the puppy. It might be best to let him finish and be more vigilant next time. If your puppy continues his elimination outside give him praise as soon as he finishes
- Never punish accidents or make an issue of them, either at the time or if discovered afterwards
- If your puppy seems to be having more accidents than usual, give him more opportunities to go outside. Only increase the time period between opportunities when you are completely confident that your puppy can last a little longer.
- Use an Enzymatic cleaner like "Urine off" or "Biozet Attack washing powder" to breakdown the enzymes within their urine. Enzymes are what dogs will smell and then mark or urinate on top of their own or another dog's previous elimination. This will help in the situations when they keep going back to a particular spot in your house to toilet.

How long will it take to house train my puppy?

- A puppy can be considered house trained when he has gone for six weeks without urinating or defecating in an undesired area
- All dogs are individuals and will develop at different rates. Some puppies will gain effective bladder control very early and for others it may take much longer
- Once house trained, your puppy should be able to last through the night, but may still have the occasional accident
- If at 6-7 months of age your puppy still has poor bladder control, seek advice from your veterinary clinic as there may be a physical problem.

Teaching your puppy recall

It's important to teach puppies to 'come' when they are called. This will enable you to; for example, call your puppy back if he is heading towards a dangerous situation, such as a busy road. If your puppy comes back to you reliably, you can allow your puppy more freedom because you'll feel more confident to allow him off the leash more often (where it is safe and legal to for your puppy to be off leash).

Getting your puppy to come on cue

- 1** Stand a short distance away from your puppy and call their name in a happy, "puppy" voice while extending your hand toward them, then drawing you hand back towards your body.
- 2** Bring the lure close to you as they run towards you, "Yes!" and reward as soon as they are close to your feet.
- 3** Take a few steps back. Show the puppy a second treat or kibble, call their name and repeat hand motion. "Yes!" and reward as soon as they are close to your feet.
- 4** Once the puppy is doing well, begin calling your puppy when they is not looking at you and then "Yes!" and reward as soon as they come to you.
- 5** Start to extend the amount of distance between you and your puppy. Starting at a few steps then extending to a few meters once they become better at it.
- 6** Once your puppy is reliably coming back to you, practice this in another room, in your back yard, front yard, nature strip, quiet park and busy parks, etc. increasing the difficulty of the environment your learning in.

TIPS

- Bend or squat down when calling your puppy. This shows the puppy with your body language that you are less threatening to approach
- Teach 'come' when the puppy is on leash before trying off leash
- If your puppy turns and goes the other way, run away from the puppy so that he chases you, as he chases you, call "come". When he reaches you give him a treat and lots of praise.
- Start in an environment where there are no distractions. When your puppy is reliably coming to you, practice this in another room, in your back yard, front yard, nature strip, quiet park and busy parks, etc. increasing the difficulty of the environment your learning in.

EMERGENCY RECALL

To be used in situations when nothing else has worked and you need them to return to you.

Call your dog, drop to the ground and flail around (like a dying cockroach!).

This is abnormal behaviour that our dogs don't usually see, so they will come and investigate to see what's going on!

Crate training your dog

Crate training is a new concept for many, but is a very effective training tool for adult dogs and puppies. It may take a little time and effort to train your dog to use the crate, but it can prove useful in a variety of situations. For instance, if you have a new dog or puppy, a crate is a fantastic way of teaching it the boundaries of the house and keeping it safe. When you're travelling in the car, visiting the vet or any other time you may need to confine your dog (eg. after surgery or if it has been injured), it's much easier and safer if your dog has been trained to enjoy being in a crate.

How big should my crate be and what type should I get?

A crate should be big enough for your dog to stand up, turn around and lie down. Crates can be plastic (used on airlines), wire (collapsible, metal pens) or collapsible fabric crates. It is not recommended to leave your dog for long periods in a fabric crate unless you are certain that your dog will be happy and calm inside it and will not scratch its way out.

I don't like the look of a crate! What will my dog think?

A crate is intended to be a 'safe haven' or 'security blanket' for the dog. By nature, dogs like small, enclosed spaces, especially when they are feeling a little bit unsure. By providing your dog with an area where it can 'escape' and know it won't be bothered, it can readily seek out this area when it needs a bit of a break or time-out.

Training your dog to use the crate

The duration of crate training varies from dog to dog. It will depend on the dog's age, temperament and past experiences. It is very important to remember that your crate should be associated only with something pleasant and training should always move at your dog's pace. Always vary the length of time that your dog will spend in its crate, especially during training. This will prevent your dog from 'expecting' to be let out at a particular time and reduce any issues such as whining or scratching at the crate door.

Introduce your dog to the crate

Place the crate in a central part of the household (living room, TV room, etc). Make the crate inviting and comfortable for your dog. Usually, dogs will go over and investigate. When your dog goes near the crate, reward it by throwing a food treat into the crate or near its entrance. Repeat this every time the dog goes near the crate. If the dog settles down inside the crate, reward this behaviour either with your voice or with food rewards. You want the dog to view the crate as a wonderful place to be, full of goodies and fun. You don't want to shut the door of the crate just yet. Your dog needs to understand that it can come and go as it pleases, therefore reinforcing it as a good place to be.

Feed your dog in the crate

Begin giving your dog its regular meals in the crate. Place the bowl inside the crate and encourage the dog to enter. If your dog readily enters the crate at dinner time, start asking it to go in and then place the food inside the crate.

As the dog becomes more comfortable eating in the crate, you can introduce closing the door. Start by closing the door as your dog eats its meal. Make sure you open it before the dog finishes its meal. As you progress, gradually leave the door closed for a few minutes at a time. Soon you should have a dog that will happily stay in its crate after a meal. If the dog whines; ignore the behaviour and try to reward it or let it out as soon as it is quiet. Next time, make sure the dog is in the crate for a slightly longer period of time.

Increase the length of time spent in the crate

Once your dog is happy in the crate for about 10 – 15 minutes after finishing its meal, you can start to confine it to the crate for longer periods. Get the dog into the crate using a command such as “crate” or “bed”. As the dog enters the crate, give it a treat, praise it and close the door. Quietly sit nearby for a few minutes and reward the dog for remaining calm and happy. You might even want to open the door and give the dog a rewarding treat-dispensing toy such as a Kong. Continue with your daily activities and return regularly to reward the dog, either verbally or with a food treat, for its calm behaviour inside the crate.

Start with short sessions and gradually increase the length of time that you leave the dog inside the crate. This may take several days or weeks.

Crating your dog at night

Once your dog is happy spending time in its crate with you around, you can introduce it to crating at night. Make sure your dog has toys or treat-dispensing toys with it to initially settle it into the routine. Keep the crate in a familiar, central area so the dog feels comfortable and settled. With young puppies or older dogs you may need to take them out for toilet breaks during the night. By making the crate a ‘fun’ and enjoyable place to be, night time crating should be an easy transition. Potential problems

Too much time in the crate

Be careful that your puppy doesn't spend too much time in its crate. While it is a fantastic tool for toilet training puppies and preventing destruction, a dog of any age should not spend all day in a crate while you are at work and again when you go to bed. This can affect your dog's muscle development and condition. Young puppies shouldn't spend more than 2-3 hours in the crate without a toilet break as they cannot last that long without relieving themselves.

Whining

If your dog begins whining in its crate, the best thing to do is ignore it. For a young puppy, whining may occur because it needs to relieve itself, so quietly take it out to the toilet on a lead, making sure not to play with it. Place it back into its crate once it has gone to the toilet. Remember that any sort of interaction, positive or negative, will be a ‘reward’ to the dog, so ignoring the whining is best. However, make sure that you reward the dog appropriately when it has settled and is quiet. Using a towel or sheet to cover the crate if the whining persists can also help settle the dog. By following these steps, you can train your dog to not only love its crate, but also see it as a safe haven. Your dog's crate can be a place to escape for a much-needed rest, a break from kids or other dogs, and even a portable home that will always be familiar no matter where you are.

Separation Anxiety

This is one of the most commonly discussed Behaviour Problems and it can manifest itself in any or all of the other problem behaviours! If your dog is exhibiting any problem behaviours, it doesn't necessarily mean that they have Separation Anxiety. True signs of Separation Anxiety include:

- Your dog starts to become anxious when you are preparing to leave home.
- Problem behaviours happen in the first 15-45 minutes after you have left.
- When you are home, your dog follows you around constantly
- Dog tries to be touching the owner whenever possible and begins to show signs of anxiety if this is prevented.

True separation anxiety requires dedicated training, behaviour modification and desensitisation exercises. In some cases it can be caused by an imbalance in the chemicals in the brain and may require medications. Ensuring that you always give your puppy some 'alone time' and encourage their independence can help to prevent separation anxiety.

HOW TO TEACH YOUR DOG TO CHILL IN 5 EASY STEPS

GOODDOGGIES.ONLINE



ASK YOUR DOG TO SIT

Instead of giving him the treat right away, see how long he will hold the position. Wait a few seconds, then give him a treat and praise.



REPEAT & STRETCH

Repeat this, only each time try to stretch the amount of time between holding the position and the treat.



CHILL

Once you feel you have this down, start adding the command "chill" and hold up your hand.



STRETCH IT OUT

Put in more repetitions using the stay command and your hand. Keeping lengthening the time between the command and the treat.



ELIMINATE THE TREAT

Once you have that down, start skipping the treat occasionally and reward with just praise.

Home alone plan

Chances are that your puppy will never have been on his own before coming to your home, so you will need to teach him that being left alone at home is not a bad thing.

Puppies will often cry when they can't be with you. During the first week, teach your puppy to be happy in his playpen or an area in your home where he can't get to you but can still see you. Practice leaving him in this area with a bed and a chew treat. You can even sit next to the area first before gradually moving away.

Once he starts loving his new playpen/area you can start leaving the room at first, then leaving the house (during the second week of your puppy being with you).

Begin by leaving your puppy home alone in his playpen with a chew treat for 5 minutes at a time, and increase the alone time every day. Do not leave your puppy for too long at the start, as he might panic and not be comfortable in the playpen anymore.



WEEK 1

Get your puppy used to loving his playpen

WEEK 2

Start leaving the house

DAY 1: LEAVE 5 MIN

DAY 2: LEAVE 10 MIN

DAY 3: LEAVE 15 MIN

DAY 4: LEAVE 30 MIN

DAY 5: LEAVE 45 MIN

DAY 6: LEAVE 60 MIN

DAY 7: LEAVE 90 MIN

DAY 8: LEAVE 120 MIN

Work up to the hours your puppy will be staying home alone later in life. But remember they are puppies – 8 hours is a long time while you are at work.

It's a good idea to break up the day by having a friend come for a visit or take your puppy out for a walk.

How to get your puppy to like his playpen:



- 1 Set up your puppy's playpen with everything your puppy will need in his "room": a bed/crate, a few toys, a puppy pad and water.
- 2 Put the playpen in an area where the puppy is still part of the family action even if he is in the pen.
- 3 Make the playpen a place where good things happen: feed your puppy in the playpen, let your puppy chew a yummy treat whilst confined in the playpen, play and cuddle with your puppy in the pen.
- 4 When you can supervise your puppy, leave the door to the playpen open, so your puppy can go in and out and reward your puppy when he goes into his playpen.
- 5 Get your puppy used to being confined whilst you are in the room. Start with short intervals. When your puppy is happy in the pen for 15 minutes, start leaving the room for short periods of time first.

PLEASE DO not leave your puppy in a playpen with his collar on.



Teaching your puppy to drop on cue

Your puppy can be trained to lie down on the cue “drop.” This is useful when your puppy needs to settle on the back seat of a car or when visitors or excited children are present. The puppy is taught to drop from a sitting position. Some puppies feel vulnerable when they are lying down and may be reluctant to do it. Be patient and keep the training slow and consistent with lots of praise.

How to teach your puppy to drop on cue

1 Ask your puppy to sit using your hand signal or verbal cue.

2 Mark and reward your puppy as soon as they sit.

3 Hold another treat in front of your puppy’s nose and slowly lower the treat to the floor between the puppy’s front paws. Puppies either like to slide their front feet out towards you (like superman!) or their back feet out (tuck position). For superman puppies, slowly pull the treat towards you once it's on the ground. For our tuck puppies, slowly push the treat underneath their chest.

4 Repeat this exercise until your puppy is lying down reliably then add the verbal cue “drop”. Say “drop” as your puppy’s front end touches the floor and mark and reward.

5 Gradually phase out food, by luring with food 2 times, but on the 3rd time do that same hand movement without the treat in your hand. "Yes!" and reward when they drop without a lure!

6 Start to reduce the height that you need to bend down to give your puppy the drop signal. We start with our hand on the ground, now only lower your hand to ankle height. Once they understand the cue at ankle height, move to mid calf, then knee, then mid thigh, then hip, then finally at chest height. Progress to each next stage once they're able to drop with the new height.

TIPS

- Make it comfortable for your puppy to drop by starting the exercise on a soft surface like a mat
- For smaller puppies, or if you have trouble bending down, use a table or another raised area
- Practice when the puppy is tired and wants to lie down, as opposed to when they are excited and ready to play
- Continue rewarding intermittently with praise or treats when your puppy lies down

Teaching your puppy to be calm while being handled (husbandry)

Ensuring that our dogs are comfortable being handled by us make it a much more enjoyable and calm experience for everyone. It is something that our puppies are not used to, so we can practice handling so they know what to expect and to remain calm and relaxed throughout.

We need to handle our dogs pretty regularly for a variety of reasons: for bath time, being brushed, having their nails clipped and checking over them for ticks or any injuries that they may have sustained.

How to teach your puppy calm handling

1 In your hand hold a handful of treats to work on while handling. Holding it so that they can access the treats from one side of your hand, make a shape similar to a kong.

2 While they are eating, gently touch them on the shoulder and working slowly down their back. Name the body part you are touching as you go so they learn where you're about to touch them.

3 Next move slowly from the shoulder down the legs then to their paws. Saying "Shoulder" "Legs" "Paws" as you go. Touch their toes and their nails gently. Work down their back legs, feet and tail.

4 Next move to their face and gently touch over their eyes, look in their ears, smell in their ears (discharge or a smell is abnormal and requires vet attention).

5 Next gently lift up one side of their lip, while they are nibbling on a treat, so you can examine their teeth.

TIPS

- Use high value treats when starting handling.
- If your puppy is displaying any stress signs, stop and give them a break.
- Practice handling in a variety of different situations, living room, back yard, front yard, at the park, in the car, in the bath tub, etc.
- Let your puppy eat treats in the bathtub before their first bath, and let them see the tap running while they are outside of the tub, then inside the tub. Let them stand in a small amount of water and eat treats while they're in there.
- Let your puppy eat some treats while you are putting on their harness or attaching their lead, reward them heavily for standing still and being calm.

Teaching your puppy to take treats gently

Teaching your puppy to take treats gently from your hand will help them not to snatch or use their teeth to bite treats out of your hand. This will ensure that they are taking treats gently from everyone in the household and avoiding overexcitement when taking treats from new people.

We want to teach our puppies to be calm and take treats gently from our hand, rather than snatching. They will learn quickly that being gentle when taking treats from us is how they will be able to access the treats.

How to teach your puppy gentle

1 In your hand hold a handful of treats and hold your hand up next to your shoulder.

2 Slowly lower your hand towards your puppy's mouth and offer them your hand with the treats in it.

3 If they are sniffing and licking the treats in your hand, say "Yes!" "Gentle".

4 If they bite, jump towards your hand or become over-excited, slowly lift your hand back up to your shoulder. Don't say anything at this time, we are communicating with our body language.

5 Re-offer them your hand with the treats in it. If they are sniffing and licking, say "Yes!" "Gentle". If they are still biting, jumping, etc, again slowly lift your hand back up to your shoulder.

6 Repeat offering your hand and lifting it back up until they are sniffing and licking only. it usually only takes them 3-5 attempts. Remember to say "Yes!" "Gentle" as soon as they are sniffing and licking only.

TIPS

- Start with lower-value treats so that your puppy doesn't become overexcited and try to snatch the treats.
- Practice this as soon as you notice them taking treats a little bit too forcefully.
- If your puppy continues to take treats roughly, you can try dropping the treats on the ground instead of taking the treat to their mouth to avoid being bitten and to stop rehearsing the behaviour of taking treats roughly from your hand.