



## PUPPY ESSENTIALS: HOUSETRAINING YOUR PUPPY

The best way to houstrain your puppy is to use a crate. Since most dogs avoid soiling where they sleep, a crate encourages control. Before four months of age, a puppy doesn't have much bladder capacity or sphincter control. He'll need to relieve himself frequently. Many people mistakenly think that when a puppy can make it through the night without going to the bathroom, he can hold it for 8 hours during the day. The truth is that bodily functions slow down at night, enabling dogs (and people) to sleep through the night. Not true during the day.

The many times a puppy will need to relief himself are predictable – upon waking, after eating, during or after play or excitement, during or after chewing, and just because it's been a while. If you puppy sniffs around and circles with his head down, it's likely he's about to squat – not always, but sometimes. Watch for these signs so you can quickly carry your puppy outside.

Follow these simple rules, and houstraining will be painless and relatively quick:

- 1) Praise your puppy every time he eliminates outside. Continue praising quietly the entire time he's squatting. Verbal praise is fine.
- 2) When you cannot supervise him, crate him. When you let him out of the crate, immediately take him outside. Once he's gone out, he can play in the house under supervision.
- 3) When you take him out, ask "Do you want to go out?" in a happy voice, pick him up and carry him where you want him to go. As he gets older, you can stop carrying him. Carrying is for young puppies that will go en route to the door or your preferred bathroom spot.
- 4) Teach your puppy where the bathroom spot is. Take him directly there, stay with him and wait until he goes. Go to the same place each time you take him out. Play in another location, not his bathroom spot. The moment he squats and starts to eliminate, say "Hurry up" or another word or phrase that will be associated with this act. Quietly praise (see #1).
- 5) Feed a high quality diet on a regular schedule. Do not vary the schedule, even on weekends, and do not vary his diet during houstraining.
- 6) Withhold water 3 hours before bed, and take him out last thing before bed.
- 7) Avoid using newspapers. Paper training teaches a dog to eliminate in the house.
- 8) Have a stool check done for worms. A puppy's stools are an indicator of health, proper diet, and proper feeding. If stools are loose, and he's free of worms, you may be overfeeding.

What about accidents? They will happen! Never use punishment. Here's what to do:

- Clean up with a non-ammonia cleaner. Ammonia draws the dog to the spot.
- If you catch your puppy ***in the act of relieving himself***, say "Ah Ah!" to interrupt him, pick him up and carry him to his spot. Wait until he relieves himself there, praise and take him back inside.
- If you didn't catch him in the act, simply clean it up. Don't mutter under your breath; don't point to it; don't drag him over to it; don't tell him how angry you are; don't even sigh and act upset. Such punishment will only confuse him, and will prolong houstraining. Most importantly, it can cause your puppy to distrust you.

If you have any questions or problems, talk to your instructor. We're here to help you with your puppy.