

House Training Procedure – Puppies

Toilet training is

What we are actually teaching puppy is *where* the toilet is and *how* to get there not how to toilet (they already know how to eliminate and what it feels like to need to go.) One mistake of going inside will set your programme back by weeks because puppy will be confused about how to identify the toilet, how to alert you that he needs to go and will be practicing what he thinks is right but is in fact location confused. The other confusing part is losing your way on the journey and remembering how to get to the toilet. Many puppies get distracted on the way and it takes some training to keep focused on the job of travelling. Keeping your eye on your puppy, establishing the offering routine, teaching Puppy to travel to the toileting spot, managing the environment and circumstances, and rewarding all elimination in the correct spots is essential. Spending a couple of weeks now for a lifetime with a house-trained dog is worth the effort.

When you are at home

Procedure

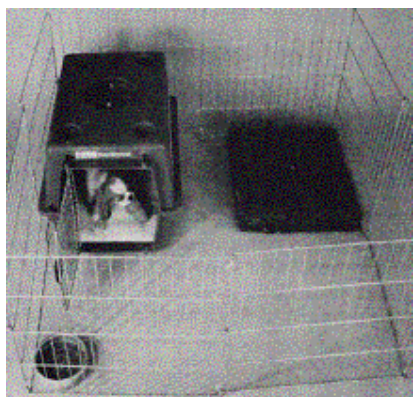
1. While in the house, puppy is confined to his crate, bed or a small area with his chew toy and a comfortable place to rest. Too much room means too many choices of places to go.
2. Every 50 minutes take puppy outside on a lead, making puppy jog if you can. It helps loosen things up. You also may want to add a brief sit at the door so that puppy learns house to ask to go outside, but be quick to avoid leaks.
3. Take puppy to the elimination spot. Puppy bladders are small so you will need to make frequent visits. The time can increase to two hours in ten minutes lots, as your puppy gets older.
4. If puppy delivers (eliminates) reward with both lavish attention and a food treat. This will build your reward history for eliminating outside. The food reward must be in your pocket so that you can give it within one second of the performance. Praise as he's going and reward immediately afterwards. Use a reward Puppy really, really likes. In order to reward immediately you must be present. Sending puppy into the yard through the back door while you watch from the window may result in a dog peeing or pooping in the yard, but without the training effect of the immediate reward you may also result in a dog that prefers to eliminate out of sight, without you. You are setting puppy up to prefer going out of your presence: remember, you will later be asking puppy to eliminate when you say so or having to remind him that going inside is not the correct activity.
5. Once elimination has occurred, have a short play with a toy, run around the yard or go on a brief walk. These activities are rewards for elimination. Puppies don't necessarily see them as opportunities to eliminate (they see them as opportunities to play, exercise and be with you) so interaction and fun opportunities are contingent on elimination *first*.
6. If puppy does not eliminate, you are bringing a FULL pup indoors so make the next trip outdoors within 10 - 15 minutes.
7. To encourage elimination while outdoors, you can try walking puppy around in a small circle or scattering delicious food treats in a circle (encourages sniff and circling which are prerequisite behaviours to toileting), or jogging puppy to the elimination spot. On lead. These can sometimes stimulate elimination.



8. Once puppy has been emptied and brought back indoors, play, interaction, cuddles and training can be enjoyed with your now empty pup. When you are finished (up to half an hour later) put puppy back in the crate so that you can repeat the process.

Other times to offer puppy a chance to eliminate are after sleep, after food, after strenuous play, after exercise, after any excitement (visitors arriving), first thing in the morning, and last thing at night.

When you have to leave puppy alone



Procedure

1. Provide puppy with a puppy play area (long-term confinement area). It should be enclosed so that puppy cannot get into anything hazardous or get caught on anything. In it should be a comfortable place to rest, water, a food stuffed toy and a toileting area - we recommend the surface that you wish puppy to go on outside - like a square of grass. Put the square of grass (pebbles, bark, decking timber) in a litter tray or on plastic to prevent damage to your floor and scent from transferring to your floor. Make sure it is big enough for puppy to get on and turn around on.
2. When you leave the house, place the food stuffed toy in the resting area with your pup and with as little fuss as possible say

good-bye and leave.

3. To ensure success, practice with the puppy play area arrangement while you are home. In other words, instead of taking puppy outdoors to eliminate on the hour, put puppy on the grass square in the play area and reward elimination on that spot.

4. The grass square can easily be moved outside when house training is completed or maintained as a permanent indoor toilet.

*Every hour on the hour,
take your puppy to its
toilet area (either its
permanent toilet in the
yard or the temporary
toilet in its long-term
confinement area), and...
handsomely reward the
pup as soon as it
eliminates.*



Sidebar: Identifying submissive urination

Puppies can eliminate as a sign of respect - called submissive urination. If your puppy does this it does not mean that your puppy is not house trained. It just means he needs more meeting of other dogs and people and to gain more confidence.

Indicators that your puppy is submissively eliminating will be that he is low to the ground, rolling over, the ears will be flat, the eyes averted, the elbows bent, he could be licking his lips, or he appears to be sitting with one front leg raised (elbow bend). Often the pee only dribbles out rather than gushes. This can be another clue.

DO NOT punish puppy for this kind of behaviour - it will only make the urination happen more frequently. Clean up and make a mental note to introduce puppy to as many new people, dogs and animals as possible as soon as possible, outside!

Thanks to our sources: 'Before you get your Puppy' - Ian Dunbar

'After you get your puppy' - Ian Dunbar

'The Perfect Puppy' - Gwen Bailey

'Positive Puppy Parenting' (presentation & notes) - Paula Denby Gibbs

'Taking Care of Puppy Business' - Gail Pivar and Leslie Nelson

'Positive Puppy Training Works' - Joel Walton

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