



HOUSETRAINING

House training is the first obstacle to tackle when bringing home a new puppy or sometimes an adult dog. The three important ingredients in the recipe for success are prevention, teaching the appropriate location and rewarding. It also takes patience and consistency.

In order to prevent a mistake, and have the opportunity to teach and reward appropriate behaviour you must keep your eyes peeled. Use baby gates to keep your pup in the same room as you or tie his leash to your belt so you can keep an eye on him. Watch for signs that he is about to eliminate such as circling or sniffing and immediately take the pup **on leash** to his designated elimination area and wait. If he eliminates praise him lavishly. You may also reward with a treat but be sure to give the treat directly after he is finished eliminating otherwise he will not know why he is being praised or rewarded. It is very important to accompany your pup outside during the training process.

Your puppy will need to “go” directly after he wakes up, 20 minutes after he drinks or eats and after playtime or exercise. Be sure to take him on leash to his elimination area at these times. Puppies do well on a schedule. Feeding on a schedule and taking the puppy out every two hours will set him up for success!

Confinement

When you are unable to watch your pup carefully, he should be confined to an area that is only large enough for him to stand up, turn around and lie down comfortably. Generally dogs do not want to eliminate where they sleep so they will hold it until you let them out. Crates

are an ideal choice and an invaluable tool for housetraining. (See crate training handout)

Puppies will not be able to hold it for longer than a few hours so when you need to leave the house for longer periods you must return so that he may relieve himself or pay a service to do this for you. If you must leave him you can leave him in a confined area with a place to sleep and an area to eliminate while he is becoming acclimated to longer periods in his crate and developing bladder control. You may confine him to a small puppy proofed area such as the kitchen, laundry room or bathroom using baby gates. You can lay a puppy pad down for him to use while you are gone, but beware teaching them to use pads in your presence. You will prolong the housetraining process and your pup may develop a lifelong surface elimination preference on papers or area rugs.

Accidents Happen

Expect that some accidents will happen. When you catch the dog in the act say “outside!” and immediately run the dog to the elimination area. The purpose of saying outside is to interrupt the pup so he may stop, not to frighten or punish. NEVER punish the puppy, you will only teach him not to eliminate in your presence and he may begin to hide to relieve himself.

If you come across an accident after it has happened NEVER punish the puppy. He will not understand why he is being punished. If the dog assumes a crouched position it is not because he feels “guilty” and knows what he has done. It is actually a submissive position, most likely he has read your body language, knows that you are



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angry for some reason and is trying to appease you.

Stop the Remarking cycle

Puppies and dogs will be attracted to remark in an area where they smell urine and feces, be sure to thoroughly clean the area with a pheromone scent remover. Taking the soiled paper towel out to the elimination area will help communicate where the appropriate location is and encourage him to go there.

Success!

The puppy will eventually begin going to the door when it feels the urge. Watch for this behaviour, praise and let him outside.

Housetraining may take as long as 8 weeks, longer for some toy breeds.