

POTTY TRAINING 101

I am not an expert but this is what we recommend to our clients and what worked for my own dog. First you **MUST** have a crate!! Be ready for some complaining from your puppy, be consistent and realize there may still be accidents from time to time. I am a firm believer that most dogs just don't become great and develop a brain until about 2 years old.

Okay, for every month old your puppy is is how long you can expect them to be able to hold their urine. Example, 3 months means 3 hours - be prepared to get up at night if necessary. Crate, crate, crate. If you can not have your eyes on the puppy at **ALL** times then the pup must be in the crate. As for the crate it should be not larger than enough room for the puppy to turn around. If you have a breed that is going to be larger it is okay to buy a larger crate you just must somehow make it smaller as the pup grows you can increase the size. The reason for this is because dogs do not like to lay in their own urine and feces. A few accidents and your puppy will learn that the crate is not a place to do their business.



Now you can expect a puppy to need to go out every time it eats, plays or comes out of the crate. When you take the dog out of the crate go out the same door to the same place in the yard **ALWAYS!** Now here comes the tough part. Give the dog 5-10 minutes to do their business - you can use a cue word if you like ("do your business" works for me). If the puppy does not do his business then take it back in and put it in its crate. Leave the puppy there for about 30 minutes and repeat your outside routine again. Continue doing this until the puppy goes and then **PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE** and a treat if you like. Remember it is important to go out the same door to the same place and only give them a few minutes. This is because on yucky days when you don't want to be outside with the dog for 30 minutes they have learned to go out and do their business first and then play. Make sure everyone in the household is doing the same thing!! Oh, and when you take them out of the crate don't get distracted - go right out to do business and only play once the "business" is done.

So now your puppy will do business outside like you want and in a timely manner. Time for the inside rules. When the puppy is out you must be watching it and **DO NOT** let it have free roam of the house!!!! Baby gates work well. Until the puppy is consistent I would suggest taking him out every 30 minutes to an hour. This can be confusing if the puppy doesn't go outside like he is supposed to - does he go in his crate now or can he stay out? That I think becomes your call and has to do with how well your puppy is doing. Again, once some routines have been established it is okay to let him stay out but you must be



able to keep your eyes on him at all times! You will learn his cues and eventually he should even go to the door to let you know.

At night the puppy should sleep in his crate until he is old enough and has a good established behavior. There will be complaining and I personally had to put my dog in the basement so I could sleep. It only took a few nights and she was fine and ready to come back up by my bed. With this said that is only for older puppies. Younger ones you should be prepared to get up with if necessary. For every month old you can expect them to be able to hold their urine for one hour.

There are products on the market that you can put in the potty area that are supposed to smell good to the puppy and make them want to potty there. I have not had experience with these but have heard people say they work and some that say they don't. For real stubborn puppies I don't think it would hurt.

If there is an accident DO NOT call attention to it. You should clean it up without your puppy seeing. If you make a big deal then the puppy thinks he can potty anywhere and it is your job to pick it up. I would also recommend cleaning it with something that will eliminate the smell. That way the dog doesn't go back to the same place. If you see the puppy in action it is okay to say NO and take the puppy out right away! If he doesn't go outside put him back in his crate and then clean up the mess. If you don't see him do it (although you have your eyes on him at all times so this won't happen) then you can take him out or just put him in his crate - I would probably go out and if no business is done back to the crate.



Those are the basics - consistency, don't get in a rush, use the same words and same places and lots of praise. If you just stick with it it will work but don't let the pup pull at your heart strings with his complaining.

As for putting your dog on a leash and attaching it to you I was taught in school that you do that more for obedience. By doing this it makes the dog pay attention to you and follow you - stay with you. I can go into a whole other thread on obedience...

Above all you are raising an infant again or for the first time and it takes time. But it will be time well spent and will be very rewarding.

Please remember, I don't think I know it all and this is just a suggestion and what has worked for many. Some dogs are harder than others just like children. So just because this worked for one it may not work for all!

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