

Housebreaking- How Do I Potty Train My Puppy?

Housebreaking a dog is a fairly simple process though it does take consistency and time. The two main goals of housebreaking are to teach your puppy where he is supposed to go by keeping his accidents to zero and teaching him to hold it until he is in the appropriate spot. The most efficient way to do accomplish these goals is to use a crate. Dogs won't soil where they sleep so the crate needs to be just large enough for the puppy to stand up, turn around and lay down comfortably. Any larger and your puppy will use a corner to go in and your housebreaking will not be as efficient.

The first rule of housebreaking is to put your dog on a schedule. Here are the instructions:

1. When your dog first wakes up, take him **on leash** immediately to the spot you'd like him to use to potty. This should be a fairly good-sized area. Tell your puppy to "Go potty" or some other potty command. Stand still and wait 3-5 minutes. When he goes repeat the potty command and as soon as he's done- as his butt comes up- pop a treat (small, semi-soft and very smelly like Natural balance Roll) into his mouth and praise him with a happy "Good boy!" Treats must be given immediately and should be carried with you to the potty spot.
2. Take your dog into the house and feed and water him. Immediately take him outside to the potty spot and repeat the first step. (Most dogs will continue to need two morning potty breaks even after they've been trained.)
3. If your puppy goes this time, he can have 15 minutes of supervised played time in the house (longer if you're outside or want to play with him more). After that playtime, he goes back in the crate for ½ hour. Then he is taken to the spot and you repeat the first step. As long as the potty time is successful you repeat these steps. If the puppy is asleep when it's time to potty, just leave him until he wakes up and start again.
4. If your puppy doesn't go, he goes back into the crate for 15 minutes. Then he is taken out again. Don't wait more than 5 minutes for him to go; just take him back into the house and put him into the crate. Then, when the 15 minutes is up, take him back outside to potty repeating the first step. After a few days, your puppy will get the idea and you can start increasing playtime and time in the crate.
5. No free feeding! Keep your dog on a feeding schedule so that he can develop an elimination schedule.
6. Always take your puppy out right after he eats or drinks anything or as soon as he comes out of the crate. Always take your puppy out every 15 minutes when he is out of the crate. Always supervise your puppy and restrict him to the room you're in until he is 100% housebroken. If your puppy acts like he has to go, take him out immediately but realize that you've waited too long.
7. After a couple of days, increase the time by 5-minute intervals and continue until your puppy is staying clean outside for an hour.
8. If your puppy does have an accident, it's not his fault so do not punish the puppy. Just clean up the mess using Nature's Miracle.
9. Throughout the growing stages of your puppy, there might be times when he backslides or tries to test the boundaries, just go several steps back to make sure he understands what exactly what he is to do.
10. A puppy isn't fully potty trained until he is mature. Please keep an eye on him during all his developmental stages and go back a couple of steps if needed.