

## House Training a Puppy

There is nothing more fun than bringing home a new puppy # for everyone except the person who has to clean up after it! While there is no fool-proof method for house training a puppy, crate training has proven quite successful. Crate training effectively teaches the puppy to "hold it" until given the opportunity to relieve himself somewhere more suitable. However, this is not an excuse to crate your new puppy for long periods of time.

This method of house training a puppy is based on the premise that a puppy would rather not mess up its living area if it doesn't have to. Puppies should NOT be left in a crate for too long. If your puppy goes to the bathroom in the crate because it could no longer "hold it," the training process will be drastically compromised.

How does one handle house training a puppy in this manner?

If no one is in your home during the day, you should put the puppy in a bathroom or another small, uncarpeted area in your home that can be blocked off. House training a puppy should only take place when you are at home. When you arrive home, take your pup out on a leash. After you play with it for a while put it in the crate. Wait an hour or so and then take it out again. If it relieves himself, shower it with praise. If it doesn't, put it back in the crate and try again about 45 minutes later. This process should be repeated until the puppy is successful.

After it goes to the bathroom it should be allowed to play free in the house. Some people find it helpful to keep a diary of the times their puppy eliminates. While this seems bizarre, it helps you to determine your puppy's habits, thus enabling you to decrease the time it has to spend in the crate.

The most important thing to remember with house training a puppy is to be consistent and offer it an enormous amount of praise. The process may take a while and it is important to understand that if the puppy has an accident during the training, it is okay. You should just increase the frequency of trips outside. If the puppy has an accident after its training has stopped, don't punish it, just revert back to the training process temporarily and you will be back on track in no time.