



Housetraining Tips

- Prevent mistakes. Each accident sets a bad precedent. Because puppies quickly develop a preference for the type of surface they have experience eliminating on, it is very important that early potty breaks occur in the correct location.
- During your puppy's first few days at home, provide constant supervision and/or use a crate or other 'safe' area to keep your puppy out of trouble when you can't be with him.
- Consider attaching the puppy's leash to your belt to be sure you are aware of all puppy activity.
- Don't keep your puppy confined in a crate longer than he is physically able to wait between potty breaks. An 8-week-old puppy should go out every hour, a 12-week-old every two hours, and a 16-week-old every three to four hours. They are generally able to hold their elimination longer overnight, but young puppies often need a potty break in the middle of the night.

Signs your puppy needs to "go potty":

- Puppies usually need to eliminate right after eating, drinking, playing and sleeping.
- Most puppies will sniff the ground and/or circle right before eliminating.
- Puppies that wander away from family activities are often looking for a place to eliminate.
- Be sure to take your puppy out before confining them and before bedtime.

How to promote good potty behavior:

- Create a potty routine and give a cue such as 'go outside' as you open the door.
- Take your puppy outside on a leash to a preferred location.
- As the pup begins to eliminate, give a cue such as 'go potty,' but be careful not to interrupt.
- As soon as the puppy is finished, click or praise heartily and provide a special treat such as a small piece of hotdog or cheese.
- If the puppy does not eliminate within 10 minutes, take him inside and provide strict supervision or confine him to his crate. After 10 minutes, leash him up and begin the potty routine again.
- When you return home after an absence, take your puppy out to potty immediately. Then, take him out again 15 minutes later. An overexcited puppy may not eliminate fully the first time.
- If you catch your puppy in the middle of an accident, interrupt him and take him outside. Reward him for finishing up in the proper location.
- Do not punish your puppy for accidents. That could make your puppy afraid to eliminate in your presence.
- Clean up all accidents thoroughly using special enzymatic cleaners designed to remove odors as well as stains.

If you have followed these recommendations for a couple of weeks and are still having difficulties, contact me to set up an appointment so that we can troubleshoot and get your puppy on the road to being fully housetrained.

If a dog that is normally housetrained begins to have accidents, please consult your veterinarian. Viruses, urinary tract infections and even hormonal imbalances can cause dogs to lose control of their bowels or bladder.