

# Housetraining

The following article is taken from Dr. Ian Dunbar's *Housetraining Behavior Blueprint*.

## Don't Let it Happen

Letting the puppy or dog make mistakes are detrimental to potty training because they create bad habits. So, you must not let mistakes happen. Whenever you are not at home, leave your pet in a long-term confinement area, such as a crate, if you know you will be gone too long have someone come let out the puppy if it's very young, or choose a single room indoors with easy-to-clean floors (bathroom, kitchen, or utility room) this becomes your puppy or dog's playroom.

Provide your dog with fresh water, a number of stuffed chew toys for entertainment.

Your dog will naturally want to eliminate as far as possible from his bed, and so will soon develop the good habit of using his toilet outside, or if they must a dog litter type box can be provided. Remember, good habits are just as hard to break as bad habits.

For a doggy toilet, use sheets of newspaper sprinkled with sand or soil, a litter box filled with a roll of grass sod, or a concrete paving slab. This way your dog will develop a sense for eliminating on soil, grass, or concrete instead of carpeting, throw rugs etc.

The purpose of long-term confinement in a single room easy to clean is to confine the dog's natural behaviors (including urinating and defecating) to an area that is protected, preventing any mistakes around the house you are not there, and to help your dog quickly develop a preference for eliminating on soil, grass, or concrete.

## Showing Them the Right Areas

When you are at home, but cannot eagle-eye your puppy or dog, confine them to a short-term area with stuffed chew toys for entertainment again. A portable dog crate makes an ideal doggy den. You can also use a tether, keeping the dog on a short leash fastened to an eye-hook in the base board near their bed, or attach the leash to your belt. This way your dog may settle down beside you while you read, work at the computer, or watch television.

Every hour on the hour, say "Let's go potty", or some other appropriate toilet instruction, and hurry your dog (on leash) to the area in the yard, or wherever outside you wish them to eliminate. Don't move from the spot you chose and repeat your instructions to potty. Give the dog or puppy up to 3 minutes to do their business. When they go, praise them profusely and give them a couple of yummy treats. It really only takes 12-18 times to get them to understand where it's best for them to go.

If the puppy or dog does not go in the allotted 3 minute time period, try putting them back in the crate for another hour. Crating temporarily inhibits the pup or dog from pottying because they do not want to mess where they lie down or eat. That's why you hurry the dog to the area to eliminate to help stimulate the bladder and bowels also. Do not confine the pup longer than need be so it does not get the chance to soil in the crate. Rule of thumb: 8 week old puppies should not be crated for longer than 3 hours at a time, 12 weeks - 4 hours, 16 weeks - 5 to 6 hours. This does not mean to say some 5,6,7 month old puppies can't hold it for 8 hours or more, it's just a good rule to try and follow to help not let mistakes happen.