

How to Crate Train your New Puppy

Training Overview

Crate Training is the number one veterinary recommended way to house train your new puppy because it uses a dog's instincts to teach good habits. Dogs are known as “den animals” and instinctively will not eliminate in what is known as their “den”. The basics to Crate Training are to build a crate as a “den”, keep your puppy on a consistent schedule, and reward them for good behavior. If used correctly, the crate will become a safe place your dog will willingly choose to sleep.

Below are some quick tips on How to Crate Train a New Puppy!



Choosing the Right Size Crate

The size of the crate is important in the training process. If the crate is too small your puppy will be uncomfortable, and if the crate is too big, your puppy will sleep on one side and use the restroom on the other side. The crate should only be big enough for your puppy to stand up, turn around, and sleep in comfortably.

Make the Crate a “Den”

The crate should become a den by making it a cozy place where your new puppy can retreat for comfort and solitude and feel safe and secure. Keep the crate in a common area of the home, where the family spends a lot of time, such as a family room or living room. Introduce your puppy to their crate with a happy and positive tone. If possible, encourage them to walk into the crate on their own while the door is open. Let them explore their new crate and get to know their new sleeping environment. Make the crate very comfortable by adding a soft bed, blanket, and soft toys to cuddle with. You can even add an old t-shirt that smells like you to help your puppy feel safe at night.

Create a Consistent Feeding Schedule

A consistent feeding schedule will aid in house-training your new puppy. If you know when your puppy is eating, you will know when it needs to use the restroom. We strongly recommend that new puppies be offered food every **FOUR** hours. Puppies burn a lot of energy playing, exploring, and getting to know their new family. Energy should be replenished through solid food every four hours to prevent low-blood sugar. Give your puppy about 30-45 minutes to digest their food and then take them to use the restroom. They should also be taken to use the restroom immediately after waking up from a nap.

Designated an Appropriate Area to Eliminate

Consistency is important in the house-training process and can be achieved by designating an appropriate area for your puppy to eliminate, and taking them to that same place every time. If you use pads, keep the pads in the same area of the home. If you take the puppy outside, take them to the same patch of grass every time. This helps them learn by scent and routine that this is the appropriate area to eliminate.

Use Positive Recognition

The most important part of training is ensuring that it is a positive experience. Remember to praise your puppy for good behavior. Calling them by their name or offering a training treat helps puppies understand they are doing well in their new owner's eyes. A simple, "*Good Job, Chloe!*" goes a long way in the training process. And as your puppy continues to bond with you, they will want to do well to please you.

Sleeping in the Crate

Puppies should sleep throughout the night in their crate. To keep them from whining at night, make sure your puppy goes to bed on an empty stomach. Puppies should be given their last meal 3 hours before bedtime, taken out to use the restroom one last time, and put to bed around the same time you go to bed. If you are still up, your puppy will hear you and cry to be out with you.

If your puppy cries at night, you will need to determine if your puppy needs out to eliminate, or if your puppy is whining to just be let out of the crate. If you know that your puppy went to bed on an empty stomach, then there is no reason they should need out to eliminate. Do not let them out if they whine, this is reinforcing bad behavior. Puppies need to learn to sleep in their crate at night during training. In the morning, they will wake you up very early to let you know they are ready to wake up and use the restroom. Take them to the same place to use the restroom, reward them with verbal recognition or a quick training treat, and keep up the training schedule.

By following these tips your new puppy should catch on quickly!

CRATE TRAINING SCHEDULE

(ADJUST AS NECESSARY)

6:00 AM - Wake Up & immediately take puppy out for potty break

6:15 AM - Breakfast

6:45 AM - 7:00 AM - Potty Break

10:00 AM Snack

10:30 AM - 10:45 AM - Potty Break

2:00 PM - Lunch

2:15 PM - 2:30 PM - Potty Break

6:00 PM - Dinner

6:15 PM - 6:30 - Potty Break

9:00 PM - Last Potty Break

9:30 PM - Bedtime



** Puppies will nap throughout the day. Remember to take your puppy out for a potty break immediately after they wake up from a nap. Puppies may need to go to bed earlier depending on the level of energy burned. Remember to offer your new puppy food every 3-4 hours to avoid hypoglycemia. If you are gone for more than 4 hours in a day, make a small space for your puppy that allows them access to their food and water and a puppy pad in case of an accident.

What NOT To Do During Training

Never leave a puppy in their crate all day. Puppies will need to go to use the restroom during the day and will soil in their crate which will not make the crate feel like a den. If you will be gone for more than 4 hours in a day, block off a small tiled area of the home, such as a laundry room or bathroom, to leave your puppy in. Leave your puppy access to their food and water bowl, leave them some toys to play with while you are gone, and leave out a training pad to use in case of an accident.

Never use the crate as punishment. Your puppy will come to fear the crate and could refuse to enter the crate. The crate should be used as a place where he feels comfort and security.

Never put food and water in your dog's crate. The crate should be used for sleeping only. You can place the food and water bowl close to the crate, just not inside of it.

Never lose patience. Crate training takes time and consistency. On average, it may take a puppy 4 - 6 months to be completely trained. As the trainer, it is your responsibility to be patient, to be consistent, and to reward good behavior.