

HOW TO HOUSETRAIN YOUR PUPPY



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“Put their nose in it!”

“Make sure the crate is small enough that they can only turn around!”

“They know what they did was wrong!”

“Restrict how much water your puppy can drink!”

All pieces of advice I have heard over the years that you should never listen to.

I wrote this book to educate new puppy owners how to humanely housetrain their dog without ever using punishment.



ABOUT AUTHOR

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome! If you're reading this book, it probably means you either have a new puppy on the way or you're already struggling with housetraining. While we all wish having a puppy could be all cuddles and playtime, you have to conquer housetraining like all the previous pet parents before you. Housetraining can be frustrating, and many think that their dog is peeing inside even though they "know" to go outside. But just like babies, puppies need to learn where it is appropriate to relieve themselves. It is a process that can seem a bit daunting for new dog owners, but with my approach your puppy will quickly learn the ropes.

By the end of this book, you will know how to establish a potty routine; the importance of frequent potty breaks; and how to handle those inevitable accidents. With dedication and patience, you will get to the finish line without tearing out your hair.

Alright, here we go. Take a big breath and let's get started. Remember: every step you take brings you closer to a housetrained dog and a cleaner, happier home.

CHAPTER 1

TIMELINE AND EXPECTATIONS

Expectations going into housetraining your puppy are important. Generally, puppies can hold their bladder for about 45 minutes to one hour for every month of age, up to a maximum of 6-8 hours. For example:

A 2-month-old puppy can hold his/her bladder for up to 1.5 - 2 hours.

A 3-month-old puppy can hold his/her bladder for up to 2.5 - 3 hours.

A 6-month-old puppy can hold his/her bladder for up to 3.5 - 6 hours.

Remember, these are general guidelines, and individual puppies may vary. The time it takes for a puppy to become fully housebroken varies depending on the breed, individual temperament, and consistency of training. On average, most puppies can be reliably housetrained by the age of 4 to 6 months. However, some puppies may take up to a year before they can fully be trusted to avoid accidents.



CHAPTER 2

POTTY BREAKS

In my opinion, the most helpful tool for housetraining your puppy is establishing a schedule for potty breaks. Puppies have small bladders and limited control over them, so taking them outside regularly is essential to prevent accidents and reinforce good habits. Here's how to effectively manage potty breaks to ensure your puppy learns where and when to go.



Establish a Routine

- **Create a consistent schedule:** This is the first step in successful houstraining. For the first week, take your puppy outside on a leash every 1-2 hours. This frequent schedule helps your puppy understand that outside is the designated place for bathroom needs. Remember that your puppy will likely need to go out shortly after eating, drinking, playing, and napping, so work that into your schedule.
- **Consistency is key:** Take your puppy to the same spot each time to help create a strong association between that location and potty time.



Start Teaching a Cue Word

- **The why:** Teaching a cue word can be invaluable when it is 10pm and pouring rain and you want your dog to understand they need to pee quickly.
- **The how:** Choose a word or phrase that you will use consistently. This cue will help your puppy understand what is expected of them. Just as your puppy begins to pee or poop, quietly say a cue word like “Go potty” or “Do your business.”
- **Be consistent:** Use a calm voice and avoid distractions during this time to help your puppy focus. After a couple weeks of use, you can start saying it to cue your puppy that it is time to potty.

Reinforce Eliminating Outside

- **The why:** This positive reinforcement helps your puppy associate going potty outside with a positive outcome.
- **The how:** As soon as your puppy finishes eliminating, reward them with a treat. Be sure to give the treat right after they go, so they clearly understand the connection.
- **Trainer tip:** Hang a treat bag right by the door and also attached one to the leash so you never find yourself empty-handed.



Keep Potty Breaks Short

- Common mistakes: One problem many puppy owners share with me is that when they bring their puppy outside to pee, they end up waiting 30 minutes, give up, go inside, only to have their puppy have an accident in the house 5 minutes later.
- Ideal time: Potty breaks should be brief, ideally less than 10 minutes. This short duration should help your puppy understand that the purpose of going outside is to relieve himself, not to play.
- Problem solving: If your puppy doesn't go within this allotted time, bring her back inside and watch her or tether her to you so you can quickly bring back her out if needed. Try again after 5 minutes and repeat as necessary.

Nighttime

- More time between outings: Lucky for you, usually once a night is all that is needed. I recommend setting your alarm to bring your puppy out once or twice in the middle of the night.
- How to get your puppy through the night: If your puppy was sound asleep when the alarm went off, add an hour to your alarm for the next night. Example: You woke up at 2am to let your puppy out but he was sound asleep so the next night you set your alarm to 3am. Before you know it, he will be sleeping through the night – and so will you!



CHAPTER 3

AVOIDING ACCIDENTS AND HANDLING MISTAKES

Even by following all my advice and taking your puppy out frequently, accidents are bound to happen and that is okay. Understanding how to manage and minimize these accidents is crucial for effective housetraining. This chapter will provide you with strategies for avoiding accidents and handling them appropriately when they inevitably occur.

Supervision is Key

- One of the most effective ways to prevent accidents is to supervise your puppy closely. When your puppy is not in her crate or pen, keep a watchful eye on her. Look for signs that she needs to go potty, such as sniffing around, circling, biting more than usual or heading towards the door. Immediate action can prevent accidents and reinforce going outside.





Using a Crate or Pen

- Helpful but not imperative: A crate or pen can be helpful during housetraining, though it is not needed. You can still train a puppy to eliminate outside without relying on the crate to train them for you.
- Benefits of a crate or pen: You will be able to tell easily if your puppy has had an accident instead of finding it a week later behind the couch. This should help long term with learning their eliminating habits and needs.
- Proper sizing: Do NOT follow the advice to buy a too-small crate so your puppy will have to sit in their pee or poop if they have an accident! Your puppy should have a nice large crate so that she can spread out.



Regular Potty Breaks

- **Reminder:** As discussed in the previous chapter, taking your puppy outside regularly is crucial. Frequent potty breaks, especially after meals, playtime, and naps, reduce the chances of accidents inside the house. Sticking to a schedule helps your puppy learn when and where to go.

Handling Accidents Calmly

- **The importance of staying calm:** Despite your best efforts, accidents will happen. How you respond to these accidents can significantly impact your puppy's progress and sense of safety.
- **How to respond:** If you catch your puppy in the act, calmly interrupt him with a gentle “oops” and immediately take him outside to his designated potty spot. If he finishes his business outside, reinforce with a treat.
- **Finding an accident:** If you find an accident, but didn't actually catch the dog in the act, simply clean it up. There is no reinforcement given.



Avoid Punishment

- Why we don't use punishment: Never yell at or punish your puppy for accidents. This can create fear and anxiety, making your puppy hesitant to go potty in your presence, even when outside. Remember, houstraining is a learning process for your puppy. Your puppy is not going in the house on purpose, and she needs your patience and understanding.

Cleaning Up Accidents

- The why: It's essential to clean up accidents thoroughly to prevent your puppy from being drawn back to the same spot.
- The how: Use an enzymatic cleaner designed for pet messes to eliminate all traces of odor. Regular household cleaners may not remove the scent completely, and your puppy might think it's okay to use that spot again. If there is a rug or doormat your puppy keeps peeing on, it might be best to temporarily remove it until your dog is older.



Plan for Alone Time

- When you need to leave your puppy: In such cases, plan ahead to avoid accidents. Arrange for a friend or neighbor to come over and let your puppy out. This helps maintain consistency and prevents setbacks in housetraining.



Monitoring Progress

- Keep track of housetraining: Keep track of your puppy's progress by noting the times she goes potty and any accidents that occur. This can help you identify patterns and adjust your routine accordingly.

CHAPTER 4

POTTY PADS

Potty pads can be a useful tool in the housetraining process, especially for small puppies who have smaller bladders and also puppies that live in apartment buildings. They provide an alternative potty area when taking your puppy outside isn't feasible, helping to prevent accidents and maintain a clean home. This chapter will guide you on how to effectively use potty pads during housetraining if you decide to go that route. Just like training your puppy to eliminate outside, teaching your puppy to use potty pads takes the same patience and consistency. Please note that I do not recommend potty pads if you are planning to teach your dog to go outside only.



When to Use Potty Pads

- When you cannot take your puppy outside frequently: If you live in an apartment, have limited access to outdoor space, or have a very busy schedule, potty pads and litter boxes offer a convenient solution.
- During bad weather: Harsh weather conditions can make outdoor potty breaks challenging. Potty pads and litter boxes ensure your puppy has a designated spot indoors if outside is not safe.

Setting Up Potty Pads

- Choose a location: Select a quiet and easily accessible area for the potty pad. Avoid placing it near your puppy's sleeping or eating areas to prevent confusion.
- Secure the pad: Use adhesive strips or a potty pad holder to keep the pad in place. This prevents your puppy from dragging it around and ensures he has a consistent spot to use.
- Provide many options: To help your puppy in the beginning, start with more pads so that they are easily accessible to your puppy. As he gets better at controlling his bladder, you can reduce to one potty pad.



Training Your Puppy to Use Potty Pads

- Supervise and guide: Watch your puppy closely for signs that she needs to go potty, such as sniffing or circling. When you see these signs, gently guide her to the potty pad.
- Use a cue word: Just like with outdoor training, use a consistent cue word or phrase, such as “Go potty,” when your puppy begins to use the pad. This helps him associate the action with the location.
- Reinforce use of the pad: Immediately give your puppy a treat after she uses the potty pad. Positive reinforcement encourages the desired behavior and motivates her to use the pad again.

CHAPTER 5

HOUSETRAINING AWAY FROM HOME

Many pet parents are excited at the prospect of traveling with their puppy but are concerned that it will mess up their puppy's schedule. With the right preparation and consistency, you can help your puppy stay on track with his housetraining even in different locations.



Preparation Before the Trip

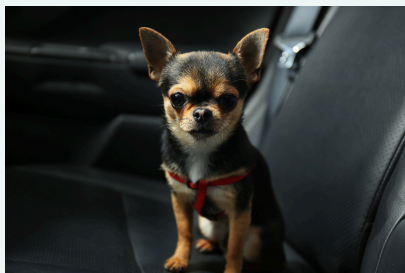
- Pack the essentials: Bring along your puppy's crate, potty pads (if using), and your enzymatic cleaner.
- Research the location: If you're staying at a hotel or a friend's house, identify suitable potty areas before you arrive. Knowing where you can take your puppy for bathroom breaks will make the transition smoother and reduce your stress.



Upon Arrival

- Designate a potty area: As soon as you arrive, take your puppy to the designated potty area. Spend some time there to let her explore and get comfortable.
- Set up a safe space: Create a safe and familiar environment by setting up your puppy's crate or pen with his bedding and toys. This will give him a secure place to rest and help prevent accidents when you cannot supervise him closely.

- **Frequent potty breaks:** Initially, take your puppy out more frequently than you might at home to help her get used to the new environment. Regular potty breaks will reduce the risk of accidents and reinforce the training.
- **Use cue words:** Continue to use the same cue words and rewards you use at home. This consistency helps your puppy understand that the same rules apply no matter where they are.



On the Road

- **Plan regular breaks:** If you're traveling by car, plan regular stops to allow your puppy to relieve himself and stretch his legs. Consistent potty breaks during travel help maintain their routine.
- **Use a crate:** If your puppy is crate-trained, use the crate during travel to provide a familiar and secure space. This can help reduce anxiety and prevent accidents in the car or at your destination.
- **Hydration and meals:** Feed your puppy and give her water according to her regular schedule and allow for potty breaks after meals.



Returning Home

- Reestablish routine: Once you return home, reestablish your puppy's usual routine immediately. Consistency helps reinforce their training and provides a sense of normalcy.
- Monitor behavior: Keep an eye on your puppy's behavior after the trip. Some puppies may need a brief adjustment period to get back into their usual habits.

FINAL WORDS

Housetraining is a journey that requires dedication and a positive attitude. By understanding your puppy's needs and providing clear guidance, you are setting him up for success. Celebrate small victories along the way and be patient with setbacks. Remember, every puppy learns at her own pace and progress is never linear.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

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