

House Training

House training is one of the most important training projects for new puppy owners, or refresh older and shelter dogs if they need it. It can be a great start to all future training if you take a positive and active role in it.

Basic House Training:

House training should only take approximately two weeks if:

- a) YOU are consistent and committed
- b) YOU are prepared to train your pup from the moment you bring him home..

Retraining a dog that has established habits can take six weeks or more!

FIRST...Take your puppy to the vet for a complete check-up. This will assure you that you have a healthy pup and are aware of any medical complications that can make house training difficult. Conditions such as intestinal upset, parasites and urinary tract infections can make house training difficult to impossible until they are cleared up.

Choose an area outside for the pup to relieve himself. Having a plan of where to go when it is time to go out is a key to success. As with any training, you can not teach the dog what is acceptable if you don't know yourself!

A positive attitude is one of the most important ingredients in house training your dog. Your puppy does not know what is wrong. When the pup has done well, pat him and praise him. The pup will want to do things that are rewarded by you. Affection, praise and food treats can all be used as a reward for proper response of eliminating outdoors.

Scheduling:

1. Create a schedule that is practical for you to maintain. If you can not stick to your schedule - you can't expect the pup to either.
2. Do not allow your pup free access to food. Be very careful of your dog's diet so you don't cause him to have an upset digestive tract.
3. Schedule your dog's bed time and waking-up time. Try to maintain this schedule.
4. Young pups take many naps. Be sure you can take your pup outside after each nap.
5. Play times and other excitement may cause the pup to need to relieve himself.
6. Most dogs will be able to "control themselves" after a few days of training for up to eight hours during the night.

Supervise in the House:

1. Know where your dog is at all times, and what he is doing, this will help you avoid accidents. Observe your pup; if he stops playing and starts to look around for a "good spot", he needs to go out.
2. If the pup starts to make a mistake take the dog straight to his toilet area. Do not yell at the dog. Do not chase the dog. Any mistakes at this stage of training are due to you not supervising your pup.
3. If you can not supervise the dog for a period of time, first take him out for a walk to give him an opportunity to relieve himself and then put the dog in a confinement area or crate (prepared with papers, just in case).
4. When you are relaxing (watching TV etc.), keep your pup with you. Give him toys to play with. You may want to keep your pup on his leash or confine him to the room where you are, so that he doesn't wander off and have an accident. Teach him that it can be enjoyable just being with you.

When you can't be with your dog:

1. Provide a small area confinement area or their crate.
2. Do not leave food and water with the dog. Do not treat them (cookies or snacks) before you leave. If possible, feed your pup his breakfast at least 2 hours before your planned departure time. This will give you time for him to eat, digest his food and relieve himself before you leave the house.
3. If you are going to be gone for more than eight hours have someone come by to take your pup out for a potty break.

Potty Routine:

1. Take your pup out on leash to the designated outdoor area. Stand quietly, so your pup can sniff around and find the right spot. Be patient and do not distract him. Do not speak or praise the dog while he is looking. If after about 5 minutes your dog hasn't gone to the bathroom, return him to the house and keep a VERY close watch for about 15 min and then try again.
2. As your pup starts to relieve himself; calmly praise him. Use a chosen word or phrase good boy etc.
3. When the dog has finished relieving himself Click and Treat. Make a big fuss and tell him how wonderful he is. Run around with him and let him sniff around a bit more.
4. Remember your dog's routine. Some dogs will "potty" two or three times per outing in the morning, but only twice per outing in the evening. Urination is often followed by defecation, while other dogs will do the reverse.

5. Be sure not to rush to get back into the house...even if the weather is bad. You do not want to punish going out to go potty. Let him sniff around a bit more and then go back into the house.

6. A general rule for a good schedule - take him out immediately after he wakes up, after he has eaten, after all play sessions and right before turning in for the night. ‘

Catching the dog "in the act" or finding an "accident" after the fact :

1. Do not punish your dog. Get him outside, to the designated latrine area. Proceed with the potty routine.

2. Clean the mess with a deodorizing or odor killing cleanser. If the dog smells his own scent as having been used as a bathroom area, the dog will continue to use the area. If the cleanser is not able to eliminate enough of the scent so that the dog can not detect it, you can help mask the scent over with vanilla extract. Just one or two drops will make it impossible for the dog to smell any lingering odor.

3. Accept the fact that you were not watching.....Keep a closer eye on your pup!!