



Crate Training

The following document will teach you how to effectively crate train your dog. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at (651) 283-7216 or housepawsmn@gmail.com.

First and foremost, remember that repetition is necessary! Your puppy will not understand what you want unless you repeatedly show it the desired behavior several times. Your puppy does not know what you expect and must be shown the proper place and time to go to the bathroom.

Your best potty-training friend is your crate. When you cannot watch your puppy, even if just for a minute, use your crate. Potty training can be a positive experience for your puppy; give your puppy special "treats" to introduce it to the crate. The puppy will only receive these treats when it is in the crate, so that the treats become associated with the crate.

Use the crate wisely, and not just when you are leaving the house. Use it also for "time outs" or as a "safe zone." By crating when you are home and while you are gone, the puppy becomes comfortable with the crate and will not worry that you are leaving it alone or that you may never return. This will help to prevent separation anxiety.

Most puppies will not soil their "den." They may have accidents the first few times they are confined to a crate, but this will resolve. To avoid accidents at night, follow this routine for the first few weeks:

1. Set your alarm for a few hours after your normal bed time. When the alarm goes off, go to the crate and *carry* your puppy outside. Place the puppy on the ground and encourage it to go to the bathroom. Make sure to praise your puppy when it does, and bring your puppy back to the crate.
2. Three hours later, do the same. Continue this pattern throughout the day, and leave your puppy in its crate overnight.
3. After a week of success (which means no accidents in the crate), continue the routine but only take your puppy out once, approximately halfway through the night. When you wake up in the morning, make sure to take your puppy outside before you do anything else. Feed your puppy and then crate it. Follow your normal morning routine, and then walk the puppy once more before leaving for the day.

4. Repeat the feeding, walking and crating at lunch time. If your puppy is less than four months old, it will not be able to maintain bladder control for more than four hours.

If the crate is too large, your puppy may eliminate on one side and sleep on the other. Buy a crate that will accommodate your pet when it is fully grown. Put a box inside the back of the crate, so that is only large enough inside for the puppy to stand and lay down comfortably. As your puppy grows, provide more room by putting in a smaller box or reducing the size of the current box. When you can rely on your puppy to always notify you before going to the bathroom, remove the box so that the puppy can use the whole crate. If the puppy goes to the bathroom in the crate, replace the box size to the point at which the puppy was reliable and allow some more time for learning.

Never leave your puppy for longer than it is able to control itself - this could force your puppy to eliminate in its crate. If the dog must be left for long periods, it should be confined to a larger area like a dog-proof room or pen. Lay paper down for elimination. As your dog gets older, its control will increase and you will be able to leave it in its crate for these longer periods.

WHAT TO EXPECT

When you begin to crate train your puppy, escape behavior and vocalization are normal and expected behaviors. Ignore your puppy until the crying stops, and never release the puppy until it is quiet. This teaches your puppy that quiet behavior - not crying - is rewarded.

Punishment may deter crying if your pet does not subside on its own, but this should be done with caution, especially with anxious pets. It is possible that punishment may exacerbate inappropriate behaviors such as vocalization.