

Crate Training Your Dog

Crate Training

Crate training... or 'crating' has a lot of benefits, especially if you start out from the beginning with it. First of all, it can be used for the life of your puppy. There will come a day that your dog will sleep in the crate and call it home- (with the door open)

It will become his safe spot.

The crate is a training tool and should never be used as punishment. If you associate the crate with guilt- he'll hate it. Make sure the crate is a safe space not prison.

In the beginning- place the puppy in the crate and leave the door open. (Secure the door so it doesn't hit the puppy and scare him) Let him get used to the crate before that night.

You can tease him by placing bits of food toward the cage and then inside- letting him go into the cage on his own.

When feeding your puppy, try placing the dishes near the cage- You are continually trying to associate good with the cage. You can even place the dish right on the inside of the cage and let him eat from outside the cage.

Each time you feed him, place the dish further back into the cage until he is standing in the cage and eating. GOOD JOB!

Now, you can close the door while he is eating and he should continue eating without much afterthought. After a few minutes open the door back up.

As you can see, this take a day or two but it will be SO worth it. Know that families without crate training can go through nightmares for months... But not you!

***Housebreaking your puppy with a crate can happen in days- not weeks.

Choosing a crate:

Crates may be plastic or 'lite'. And the metal type. Metal ones are more permanent fixtures where the plastic ones can be used for traveling or an airplane. Your crate should be large enough for him to use when he is full-grown and that he can stand and walk around in...

NOTE: Getting the right size in the beginning- keeps you from buying more than one.

Crating is the BOMB when it comes to housebreaking your puppy. You should start this process when the puppy is 8 weeks or older, although at 8 weeks- you've got to know you have a baby on your hands. His bladder control will not be long... or consistent.

We're talking an hour or two at the most. So expect some accidents and clean them up quickly. You don't want to bring up what is called a dirty dog.

A dirty dog gets used to sitting and sleeping in their 'mess.' And soon- it doesn't matter to them and becomes real tough to crate train one of these 'dirty dogs'. NOTE: Be careful when buying a puppy through a pet store- Take note of how often they clean the cages... or is the puppy sitting in his mess for hours.

Ok, you've gotten the crate- big enough for him to use when he is full grown. The problem is IF you leave it this size for the puppy, he will go to one corner and make it his restroom- ruining the entire reason you are crate training. So- you need to place a large cardboard box inside the crate and only allow enough room for them to sleep in...

BUT- in the first few days- it helps to start this on the weekend so that you are giving a lot of time and paying attention to the puppy. You want to start off on the right paw- I mean foot.☺

Your goal is that you are teaching your puppy bladder control- he will try to hold his bladder for as long as he can. This is what you want. No, at first the puppy will whine and cry and bark and want out.

One of the ways to help this stop is to place a blanket or sheet over the cage... your puppy will go to sleep in minutes.

PLEASE- DO NOT GIVE IN- to your puppy's whining and let him out. If you do- you have just programmed him- and he knows exactly what to do to get out and you have defeated the entire purpose for the crate. Yes, he will whine just because he is away

from the one he loves, but if you give in- you have defeated the purpose. Once he stops whining, then and only then- you can let him out.

At night- hold off giving any food and water for a few hours- You are giving your puppy the best chance to hold his bladder until morning.

Just like having a baby, you would want to get up at least once in the middle of the night and take him outside. This will stop soon- but you do want to do this if at all possible.

Welcome to puppy parenting.

So here's the routine:

Place puppy in crate at night, close the door, say your goodnights and cover the crate.

He will wake up in the middle of the night and start whining or barking- this the prime time to take him outside and let him do his business...

Once your puppy is 12 weeks or older- he can hold it for as long as 6 hours... YEAH!

That is how you use the crate to potty train.

If you are leaving him in there during the day, when you get home, very calmly let him out and go outside with him. If you go in

exciting and talking him that high voice, he'll pee all over himself and the cage.

Let's talk about using the crate during the rebellious teenage years... Ok, actually this will be between 8 to 12 months old. Your puppy will get loosing their baby teeth and will chew everything in site... including shoes and furniture.

Use the crate during the day when you are gone.

Let's review:

1. Never let kids or other animals into the cage. This is their personal space.
2. Crate training HAS TO BE DONE 100% OF THE TIME.
3. Covering the crate at night helps the puppy adjust to his cage and will make the transition much easier.
4. Be sure you line the cage with a towel or blanket that you don't mind throwing away- there will be accidents.
5. Place a few toys in the cage for entertainment.
6. Never use the crate as punishment.

When to use:

At night when you are trying to housebreak them.

When you are not home, to avoid accidents.

When you cannot watch your puppy.

Where to place:

In a high traffic area- you want the puppy to feel like he is part of the family- even in the cage. Place a soft blanket or towel in the bottom. Don't forget to make the space only be enough to turn around in and stand up- anymore and one side of the cage will become the bathroom.

If you place in the bedroom, just know you will have sleepless nights.

Well, there you have it- Cage potty training. I personally have used this with three dogs and I love it. Try it yourself and I think you'll be just as hooked.