

Potty Training

POTTY TRAINING YOUR BUNDLE OF JOY

Puppies want to please their owners. When puppies make potty mistakes, they are not being bad; they are just untrained puppies. When potty training your puppy, you must have realistic expectations about its abilities to hold its urine and feces. Have a designated potty area, communicate clearly to your puppy, and always use lots positive reinforcement. With the right potty training methods and patience, you can successfully potty train your bundle of joy easily and with the least amount of stress to both you and your new “little darling.”

Age

Each breed of puppy develops bladder and bowel control at different ages. Usually, puppies do not develop full bladder and bowel control until they are six months of age. So, until they are six months of age, **DO NOT EXPECT PERFECTION!** It is of the utmost importance that you do not punish your puppy for what he cannot control. Your puppy is just like a human infant; bladder and bowel control is developed with age. Close supervision is a very important part of training. **DO NOT** consider your puppy housetrained until he or she has gone at least four consecutive weeks without pottying in an unacceptable spot. For older dogs, this period should be even longer.

Pick A Potty Spot

Pick a potty spot where your puppy will relieve itself. Since puppies do not have very good bladder and bowel control, pick a spot that is easily accessible at all times. Choose a spot that is away from your puppy's food and water. Puppies usually do not like to go to the bathroom by their food, water, or bedding. Make sure you are satisfied with the area as a potty. Be consistent with the designated area because if you move the potty area around you will confuse the puppy. The potty spot can be outdoors or indoors. If you choose an indoor potty spot, place puppy potty pads on the ground at the desired area.

When Does A puppy Need To Potty?

An eight-week-old puppy should be taken outside every one to three hours. Older puppies can generally wait longer between outings. Most puppies should be taken out: * after waking in the morning, * after naps, * after meals, *after playing or training, * and immediately before being put to bed. Feeding schedules are very important. Most puppies will potty within an hour after eating. Once you set your puppy's feeding schedule, you will have some control over when he or she needs to go. Schedule your puppy's dinner times so that you will be available to let him or her out after eating. Avoid giving your puppy a large meal just prior to confining him or her or it may have to go when you're not around to take the puppy out. Schedule feeding two to three times daily on a consistent schedule. Have food available for only 30 to 40 minutes, and then remove it. The last feeding of the day should be done several hours before it's the puppy's bedtime or confinement for the night. By controlling the feeding schedule, exercise sessions, confinement periods, and trips to the potty area, your puppy will quickly develop a reliable schedule for going to the bathroom.

Teaching Your Puppy To Use The Potty Spot

Bring your puppy over to the potty spot. Whenever your puppy wakes up or after he eats are automatic times it is likely to use the bathroom. Immediately take it to the potty area. Pottying on command is a way to train your puppy and to avoid spending a lot of time waiting for you puppy to go to the bathroom. This technique requires you to teach him or her to potty on a unique command. The command can be something like, “Hurry Up” or “Time to Potty”, in an upbeat tone of voice. After a few weeks of training, you'll notice that when you say the command, your puppy will begin pre-potty sniffing and circling and shortly potty thereafter. Make sure you heap lots of praise on a deed well done.

If your puppy relieves itself somewhere other than the designated potty area, make sure it understands that this is not acceptable with a firm "NO". Take a paper towel and soak up the urine or feces and take it to the designated potty area along with your puppy and set both down while explaining "potty here". Make sure you clean up the mistaken potty area thoroughly with a natural enzyme pet-odor spray to fully remove the odor. If a carpeted area has been soaked with urine, be sure to saturate it with the cleaning product and not merely spray the surface. If the smell is left, your puppy will continue to relieve itself in that spot. I have found Febreze pet odor eliminator spray to also be most useful. Whenever your puppy successfully goes to the bathroom in the designated area, praise and give him or her treats as a reward. When training puppies, always leave a little bit of urine or feces in the potty area so that the puppy knows it is supposed to go to the bathroom there.

If you potty train your puppy to go indoors and you later want to train it to go outdoors, move the puppy pad to the backyard. Bring your puppy to the new spot and show it to him or her. Regularly show the spot to your puppy until it has become routine for it to go there. ALWAYS expect accidents at first. Once your puppy is used to going to the bathroom in the new outside spot and is no longer having accidents indoors, then the potty pad can be removed. PLEASE DO NOT SWITCH FROM AN INDOOR TO AN OUTDOOR POTTY AREA UNTIL YOU PUPPY IS FULLY POTTY TRAINED. Baby gates or playpens are helpful to control movement throughout the house and to aid supervision. You can also put your puppy in its puppy crate or designated time out area when you cannot supervise it.

Positive Reinforcement

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT is a must when potty training your puppy. Do not punish or get upset with your puppy for making a mistake. Be firm with your corrections though. Say "NO, NO" with conviction in order to make an impact on the puppy that he has done something wrong. Don't beat your puppy. You can get just as much attention with a firm verbal correction. Puppies can understand the tone in your voice from being in trouble to being praised. Puppies respond and learn better with praise when they do things right. ALWAYS PRAISE YOUR PUPPY WHEN HE OR SHE SUCCEEDS!!!! Nervous wetting is sometimes a problem when your puppy squats and urinates when he greets you, this is called submissive urination. Dogs and puppies that urinate during greetings are very sensitive and should never be scolded when this is the case, because this punishment only makes the problem worse. Most puppies will grow out of this behavior if you are calm, quiet, and avoid reaching toward the head during greetings.

When Potty Training Is Not Working

A puppy may take six or more months to fully become potty trained. If after eight months your puppy does not become potty trained, there may be a problem. There are two causes for a puppy not to potty train. The first cause is a medical problem. Some puppies and dogs have medical problems that make it so they do not have bladder and bowel control. Take your puppy to a veterinarian and explain the potty training situation so that the vet can examine your puppy to determine if a medical problem exists. The second cause for lack of success in potty training is human error. If humans do not give clear directions in a calm manner and do not use positive reinforcement, they will likely confuse their puppy and thus create potty training problems. Puppies and dogs alike want to please their humans. You are their Mommy and/or Daddy, but if they are confused, they do not know how to. If potty training your puppy has not been successful and your veterinarian has ruled out any medical problems, evaluate YOUR potty training methods to make sure YOU are giving the proper and clear signals needed for your bundle of joy to understand what is right from wrong. Always remember to make yourself clear as to what is being expected and then back it up with positive reinforcement when the task has been successful.

Please remember that no matter how frustrating or how long this takes to achieve your goal keep in mind that:

“Puppies are nature’s remedy for feeling unloved, plus numerous other ailments in life.”