

## POTTY TRAINING BASICS FOR PUPPIES & UNTRAINED DOGS

### KEY FACTOR



**Supervision is KEY:** Whenever your puppy is not under your direct supervision, he should be crated or tethered to you so you can be aware if he's sniffing to let you know he needs to potty. A puppy needs the equivalent of a crib / play-pen to keep him out of trouble.



### HOW LONG CAN THE PUPPY HOLD IT?



- Your puppy **can hold her bladder for her age in months + 1**. (e.g. if your puppy is 2 mos old, she can possibly hold it 3 hrs). This is only an estimate. A resting or sleeping puppy **may be able to go longer** or one who just ate and is running around like a maniac **may not be able to make it 10 minutes**.
- Some pups can hold their bladder overnight while they are sleeping - **you're lucky if this is happening!**. If not, you may have to get up to **take your puppy outside several times a night** when he gets restless. It's **best that the crate is located in your room** where you can more easily respond when you hear your puppy. The older the puppy gets, the more bladder control he develops, so this won't last forever. The more effort you put into being consistent, the quicker it'll happen.

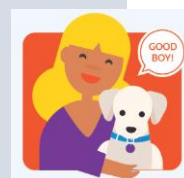
### HOW DOES A PUPPY LEARN TO HOLD IT?

- A dog **normally doesn't want to potty in her "den,"** which is usually where she sleeps. This is why crating is so helpful in potty training. The size of the crate **should allow your pup to stretch out comfortably and turn around, but not be big enough so that she can potty in one end and sleep in the other**. Unless her breeder forced her to live in an environment where she had no choice but to lie in her mess and ruined this instinct, she will normally hold it rather than do that.
- Most dog owners **use one family-oriented room when playing with their puppies**, such as the living room. This is where the pup spends most of his time when he's not crated. **So this will be the next area that he considers "den."** What many owners notice is that the puppy may not potty in this room, but will go to a hallway, other room, or behind furniture to go. That's **because those other areas have not been accepted as "den" yet**.
- Remember, supervision is key. When the **pup is in this room and running free, there must be a human directly watching him**. If he has the opportunity to potty undetected, he will have just learned that it's normal to go in that room. Now you not only have to teach him where to go, you also have a habit to break. **He also must not be allowed access to any other area in the house at this point unless he's tethered or being watched**. Prevention of accidents will go a long way in expediting your puppy's training.
- Once your puppy **has not gone potty in one area for 2-3 weeks**, then you can open up another **small area** for him. **Feed him in there, play with him in there, let him take naps there**. Once he hasn't gone potty in that area for 2-3 weeks, you can open up another area. **This is how your puppy will learn that your whole house is "den."**

**HOW DO I DO THIS?** *Dogs are creatures of habit. The more planned potty breaks, the easier time your puppy will have understanding what's expected of him. One of the most common complaints is: "I took my puppy out for a long walk, and he didn't poop. As soon as we got in, he did!" This is because your puppy's a very smart creature. He loves his walkies, and it doesn't take long for a puppy to learn that as soon as he poops, the walkies are over. For you, that's the purpose of the walk. So if that ends it, he may hold it as long as he can to try to avoid having the walk end.*

STEPS FOR SUCCESS

- Always take him out on leash, use the same door, and go to the same spot where you would prefer that he potty.
- Stand quietly, not playing, not entertaining him in any way. If he starts to sniff or circle, you can quietly say, "go potty."
- Once he goes, praise and reward him lavishly and take him for his walkies.
- If he doesn't go in 5-10 minutes, take him back inside and put him in the crate. Try again in 20 minutes.



**PLEASE  
NOTE...**

If you just open the door and let your puppy run out into a fenced yard, **there's no learning going on**. So **even if you have a fenced yard, it's highly recommended to use a leash and follow the steps**. As a reward after he goes potty, you can take the leash off and instruct him to "go play."



**WHEN Does He Need to Go Out?**



After he wakes up in the a.m.



After time in his crate



After eating



Just before bedtime



After playtime



After napping

....and many times in between...

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN MY PUPPY MAKES A MISTAKE?**

- When you catch your puppy in the act, **distract him with a cheerful (NOT ANGRY) sound**, and scoop him outside to his potty place **as soon as possible**, following the steps. It's **best to carry him out** instead of letting him walk, because if he didn't finish, he may not be able to hold it until you get him there.
- If you don't catch him, don't do anything. Just clean it up.** Always use an **enzyme cleaner** or your puppy will still be able to smell it and be **drawn back to the same spot**. If you discipline your puppy for housebreaking mistakes, it can backfire on you. **Your puppy doesn't understand "Mommy/daddy doesn't want me to go here."** He thinks you don't want him to **GO**. That can result in your puppy sneaking off to hide it and may cause him to be reluctant to go outside in front of you. If you must discipline, take a rolled-up newspaper and whack yourself in the head with it, repeating, **"I must remember to better supervise my puppy."**



**FEEDING TIPS**



- What goes in will come out : If you have your puppy on a **cheap dog food, he'll have to eat more of it** to get the same nutrition, and that means **he will also potty more**. The best food for your puppy is one that gives him energy, a healthy shiny coat, bright eyes, firm stools and overall vitality. Each puppy is different, so there's no one best food. Unfortunately, **most of the foods sold in grocery stores are of poor quality**, and that's all you'll find there.
- It's much easier to house-train your puppy if you **have him on a feeding schedule** instead of "free feeding" (leaving the food down at all times). A young **puppy should eat 3x a day**, at the **same times** each day. Put down a measured amount, wait 10 minutes, and remove what is not eaten until the next feeding time. This will keep him regular so you can better monitor when he needs to potty. **A dog who is "free fed" is also usually harder to train with treats**, since he's less likely to be food-motivated than one who has to wait for meals.

**A WORD ON SUBMISSIVE URINATION:** *Some puppies will urinate a few drops (or more) when they are excited or fearful. Normally puppies outgrow this within a few months, though some can take quite a bit longer. This is an instinctive act of appeasement, and the puppy has no voluntary control over it. If you make a fuss over it, the pup will tend to do it even more. Manage it as calmly as you can. If your pup urinates upon greeting you when you come home, make your entrances as low-key as possible, ignoring him until he's calmed, or greet him outside.*



**MY PUPPY WAS POTTY TRAINED AND NOW SHE'S NOT!**

What's changed? A new work schedule? New construction? Anybody leave or join your family? Dogs don't take well to change, and sometimes this can affect potty habits. If so, just go back to the steps and start over. It won't take as long. If there have been no major changes, take your puppy to the vet. Urinary tract infections are a fairly common cause for incontinence. Occasionally after a spay or neuter a puppy can develop a "leak," which is correctable with medication..

\* For further information, contact your Foster Coordinator