

House training



This aspect of training should start from the moment your puppy or dog arrives in their new home, and you should put all your efforts into establishing a toileting routine over the next few weeks. The harder you work at house training, the sooner your puppy or dog will learn what is required.

Golden Rules



- If you would like your dog to toilet in a certain area of the garden, an obvious barrier or fencing will help make it clear for both your dog and children and it also makes cleaning up easier.
 - Use a verbal cue such as “busy, busy” every time your dog toilets. This will teach them to associate the word with the action, and with consistency your dog will learn to toilet on cue.
- Take your puppy/dog out at regular intervals to the toileting area and particularly:
 - when they first wake in the morning
 - after meals
 - after play sessions
 - last thing at night
 - As a minimum requirement, a puppy will need to go out every hour throughout the day, or if accidents are frequent, more often. This time can be extended gradually at the rate of your dog’s development.
 - Accompany your puppy into the garden/toileting area so you can give the verbal cue and praise them when they go to the toilet. It is best not to leave the door open with free access to the garden as this can delay house training.
 - When your pup has toileted, have a little play with them **after** so that they do not think that the fun of being outside stops as soon as they have been. If they are taken back to the house immediately, they may start to adopt delaying tactics.
 - Read your puppy/dog’s body language to tell when they need to go. Most come to an abrupt halt, sniff, and circle before performing. If you see the signs, you can react in time.

Child Development

If you are working on getting children into a toileting routine it can be very useful to involve them in helping to train the puppy/dog, by asking them to reward their dog when they have toileted in their designated area. Their dog can then follow them to the toilet and wait outside the door for their second reward. This can be built into daily routines for both your dog and child.

Night Time

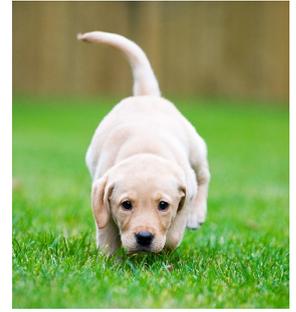
Puppies cannot be expected to last throughout the whole night. Your puppy can sleep either in a roomy closed crate (after plenty of positive crate training) or in a secure room with a baby gate/closed door. Overnight, every two hours, gently wake your puppy to take them outside to toilet, praise as normal, then put them back to bed with no play or excitement. When your puppy doesn’t need to toilet each time, you can gradually reduce the frequency to every 3 hours, then every 4, until it’s the whole night. This ensures your puppy has ample opportunity to toilet, doesn’t need to toilet in their bed, doesn’t learn to wake you up by crying, and strengthens the existing toilet training. If your puppy toilets overnight, you need to take them out more regularly. Every puppy develops at a different rate.



When accidents happen

Despite all your best efforts, your puppy/dog will have the occasional 'accident' in the house until their toileting routine is fully established.

The old fashioned punishing remedy was to reprimand the puppy and rub their nose in the mess. Fortunately, our understanding of dogs has advanced and this treatment is not only considered harsh but completely ineffectual. Our puppy will learn nothing from the experience, other than 'humans are bad' and even to never toilet when near a human. Some dogs may also learn to eat their own faeces due to this method.



If you discover an accident in the house, simply clean it up and try to work out why it has happened. Make sure you use a deodoriser on the area to eliminate all traces of smell, otherwise your puppy might be tempted to use that spot again.

If you catch your puppy whilst they are toileting in the house, you can turn this into a lesson. Pick up the puppy and take them outside to their toileting area. Give your verbal cue, and hopefully, they will oblige. When they do, remember to give lots of praise – at least your puppy got it right in the end!

You may also notice that your puppy is toilet trained in your house but when visiting others they will commonly have an accident— this is because they need to generalise their house training to other houses and situations. When visiting, toilet your dog in the garden first before going inside and keep a close eye on them ready to take them outside if they show signs of wanting to go.

Common Mistakes

If house training is not going according to plan, you need to revise your house-training regime. Here are some common mistakes that may explain the lack of progress:

- You may not be taking your puppy out often enough. It may seem that you are continually taking your puppy out, but if they keep having accidents they need to go out more frequently.
- You may not be accompanying your pup into the garden for toileting. It may be cold or raining, and this would put your pup off just as much as it would you. It is important to go out with them **every** time so that they learn what is required, and are praised when they perform.
- In the warmer weather, it is tempting to leave the door to the garden open so that your puppy can wander in and out at will. This however can cause problems because you do not know whether your puppy has toileted or not, you are not present to praise them when they do go, your puppy does not form a clear notion of indoors and outdoors, and is more likely to have accidents in the house.
- You may be letting them stray outside their toileting area so they think they are free to explore rather than concentrating on what you want them to do.
- You may have been taking your pup back to the house as soon as they have performed rather than having a short play/praise session with them. This sometimes leads to pup delaying their toileting to prolong their time in the garden.
- Your puppy may not be confident being left alone, which can result in them toileting. Contact the **Family Dog Team** if you feel this may be a problem.

Out and about

Carry poo bags with you so that you can clear up after your dog when you are out on walks etc. Remember that it is against the law not to do this and you risk being fined.