



Elimination Housetraining

Housetraining is a matter of scheduling, geography, and consistency no matter the age of the dog. Limit the “geography” or the amount of space in the house the dog has free access to until housetraining becomes more consistent. It can be very tempting to eliminate down the back hallway when no one is looking! As your dog or puppy becomes more reliable, they can have more of the house.

Times we want to take them outside are:

- Within 10 minutes after your pup eats
- As soon as they wake from sleep or a nap
- A few minutes after they start playing (activity will get the “juices” flowing),
- Every 2 hours on a schedule, minimum
- Just before bedtime

Take them out, and ask for a **“Hurry Up!”**, **“Potty!”**, or **“Do Your Business!”**, and praise them when they do pee or poop. A treat is often not necessary, but lots of praise is important just **after** that pee or poop.

Puppy Housetraining

The “rule” for holding it overnight is the puppy’s age in months, plus 1, equals the amount of time a puppy can hold elimination in hours. For a 2.5 month old puppy example:

$$2.5 + 1 = 3.5$$

Puppy can hold it overnight 3.5 hours realistically. This can be handled by one of two methods: (1) puppy pee pads in a large crate or exercise pen, or (2) set an alarm clock for 12 am, take puppy outside quietly, let puppy eliminate, and crate her back up for more sleep time. The second method actually teaches puppy the valuable skill of going back into the crate and settling down immediately. And don’t fret. Remember this is only for a very short period of time, perhaps a month or two.

A puppy takes time to develop the **“I need to go outside”** dance. Watch for the subtle signs of turning, looking at the door, slowing down, squatting, or discomfort. Take them outside when you see this, even if they don’t eliminate. We want puppy to start asking to go out!

If puppy makes a mistake, urge them to go outside or pick them up calmly, and let them finish outside. The more we can prevent the accidents, the less common they will be. Never scold them for making a mistake in the house – they won’t understand, and might even start to not want to eliminate when we are close by because they are afraid of us. Make it positive, always!