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## CRATE TRAINING

Crate training takes advantage of your dog's natural instincts as a den animal. The crate becomes your dog's den, a place to sleep, where they find comfort and solitude. The primary use for a crate is housetraining, because dogs don't like to soil their dens. The crate can limit access to the rest of the house while they learn other rules, like not to chew on furniture. A crate is not a magical solution to common canine behaviour. If not used correctly, a dog can feel trapped and frustrated. A crate is not meant to be used as a punishment. It is also not meant to be a long-term place to "store" your dog for hours on end. Ideally, an adult dog should not be left in a crate for more than four to five hours at a time. For puppies, you cannot leave them in the crate longer than their physical bladder capacity, which depending on their age and breed might be no more than an hour or so.

Your dog's crate should be just large enough for them to stand up and turn around in. If your dog is still growing, choose a crate size that will accommodate their adult size. Block off the excess crate space so your dog can't eliminate at one end and retreat to the other. The crate should be left in a nice, quiet area for your dog so he will not be overly stimulated by noise and activity passing by him. Don't let children, adults or other animals in the home tease the dog in the crate.

Crate training can take days or weeks, depending on your dog's age, temperament and past experiences. It's important to keep two things in mind while crate training: The crate should always be associated with something pleasant and training should take place in a series of small steps. Don't go too fast.

### Using crates to housetrain your dog:

Your dog or puppy should be kept in the crate any time that you cannot watch it 100%. This means that you are able to watch the dog at ALL times and move him quickly outside if he starts to eliminate. If your attention will be divided by tasks like cooking, talking on the phone, watching TV etc., then do not crate the dog. Rather, use the "umbilical cord" method. Use the dog's leash to tie the dog to you, either by looping the leash around your waist, or onto your belt.



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For puppies, release them from the crate approximately once every hour or so. This allows you more opportunities to reinforce the puppy for going outside. Take them IMMEDIATELY outside by running with them on leash to your door and outside. Have some especially good treats on hand when you do this. When you are outside, try to stand in one general area and give your dog a cue (Go Potty!). Most puppies will eliminate within five minutes of taking them outside.

If the puppy eliminates, give him some of the treats, praise him calmly and happily, and take him back inside. It is ok to let the puppy run loose in the house, as long as he is supervised by you 100%. After about an hour, you can put him back in the crate, and restart the whole process again.

If the puppy does not eliminate, take him back inside and put him in the crate for another 10 minutes. Say nothing to him and do not give him treats. Then take him back outside to the same place and try again.

If you are consistent with this pattern, your puppy will quickly learn that if he holds his urine and feces until you take him outside, not only will he get relief and be able to eliminate, but he will get a treat as well. As your puppy or dog starts to demonstrate that he has learned the "rules" you can begin to phase out the food treats and replace with praise and petting, or play time with you or with a toy.