

Crate Training

Crate training is an effective way to keep your dog safe, comfortable and out of mischief while you are out of the house and is extremely effective in house-training as well. Dogs like small den-like spaces because they are safe and secure. You can use the crate if your dog needs to rest or recover from injury and crates even help prevent anxiety from being left alone.

1. Choose a crate that is the right size for your dog: it should be big enough for your dog to stand up and turn around. If it's too small it will be uncomfortable, but if it's too large they are more likely to have an accident.
2. Make sure your dog always has a positive association with being in the crate.
3. Place a blanket or sheet on the bottom for comfort and then add a few toys or even one of your tee-shirts so they have your smell with them. Drape a light blanket over the top to create a more den-like environment but make sure there is plenty of ventilation if you do this.
4. Each time you bring your dog to the crate, toss in a yummy treat and give a cue such as "Crate!". If your dog is very nervous of the crate, let them walk right out and then repeat the exercise. If they are relatively comfortable, close the door and leave them for a few minutes. When you are ready to let your dog out of the crate, make sure they are not barking or whining. If quiet, simply open the door and walk away calmly. Gradually increase the duration each time you practice.
5. Dogs usually need to eliminate after being in the crate for a few hours so go for a potty walk soon after you take them out.

Remember, the crate is not a punishment and dogs should never be left in there for extended periods of time. Treat the crate as your dog's special place and they'll soon love it, too!

