

Housebreaking

Teaching your dog to potty in the right place is an important step to creating a peaceful home. There are a variety of ways to housetrain your dog including crate training, paper training and frequent trips outside. No matter which method you choose, three key components to housebreaking are:

- 1. Supervision:** Keep your dog within sight so you can watch for signals that your dog is looking for a spot to go. Set up gates to keep them in the same room or keep ahold of their leash. Typically, a quickening pace or excess sniffing is one of the first signs. When you see a sign, quickly leash up and go outside. If they don't "go" within 3-5 minutes, bring them inside and supervise. Crating during times you cannot supervise is strongly advised!
- 2. Consistency:** Dogs thrive on a routine. Create a schedule that allows you to set times for feeding (no grazing!), walking, playing etc. Common events that prompt the need to go include after: waking up, playtime, eating/drinking, and gnawing a bone. Monitor daily activities and incorporate potty breaks into their routine.
- 3. Positive Reinforcement:** Reward and praise your dog at the exact moment they eliminate in the right spot. If you find an accident there is no benefit to reprimanding your dog, just clean it up, evaluate what happened and how to improve. If you catch your dog "in the act", mark with an "Ah!" and quickly leash up and take them out, reward when they finish.

With patience and consistency, your dog will begin to understand the appropriate place to go. Please consult with your veterinarian if your previously housebroken dog has suddenly started having accidents to rule out any medical issues.

