

10 EASY STEPS TO HOUSETRAIN YOUR DOG

Please note: in this article, the term "elimination" refers to the dog urinating and/or defecating. We group these terms together for simplicity.

1. Prevent undesirable elimination by not letting your dog wander all over the house without supervision and by keeping your dog confined in a small area when you can't observe him/her directly and constantly.
2. When your dog sniffs the ground or circles around, quickly but calmly take him/her to the desired elimination area (outside). Ideally, don't wait for these behaviors. Take your dog out regularly as described below.
3. Feed your dog a measured amount of food at the same times every day. When your dog walks away from the bowl, or after about 30 minutes, pick up the bowl. This helps prevent "grazing" in which the dog will pick small amounts all day long. Scheduled meals keep your dog "regular" and elimination habits to your schedule.
4. Puppies instinctively need to eliminate directly after eating, drinking, playing, resting, sleeping, or being confined. Being that these things are basically all puppies do, they need to be taken outside or to the appropriate elimination spot early and often.
5. After any of the above activities, take your dog to the selected elimination area (again, you can't do this step enough).
6. Use a specific verbal cue that you want your dog to associate with desirable elimination, such as "Go potty" or "Do your business". Make sure everyone in your household or that will handle your dog follows the same verbal commands.
7. When your dog begins to eliminate, quietly praise him. If you shout and jump up and down, you may distract your dog and stop him/her from successfully eliminating.
8. When your dog is done, praise him enthusiastically, pet him, and reward him with a treat immediately.
9. Reward each time with praise, but as your dog learns, give food rewards intermittently. This will help later in the dog's life when you may need him/her to go someplace when you do not have treats readily available, such as on a trip or in an emergency. This sounds silly, but some animals become very accustomed to being rewarded with food and will "hold it" for very long and unhealthy periods of time.
10. Prevention is the key to success. Preventing accidents requires that you become aware of how often your puppy needs to eliminate. Young puppies (8 to 12 weeks of age) may need to be taken outside every 30 to 60 minutes (or less, depending on the dog).

***** Keep a close eye...Recognize your dog's signals...Understand his instincts...Reward his appropriate behavior *****