

House Training

When working on house training with any age of dog, it's important to, first, make sure that there are not any medical issues that would be affecting the dog's "pottying" schedule (urinary tract infection, gastrointestinal upset, change of diet, stress, medication side effects, etc.).

When all medical concerns are ruled out, it is important to provide consistency and routine:

- Bring the dog outside through the same door every time they are taken outside. This will help them learn where they need to go when they have to go outside.
- Keep your dog on a consistent feeding schedule and remove food between meals.
- Praise and reward your dog when they go to the bathroom outside. Bring treats outside with you and give one to your dog immediately after they go to the bathroom.
- Monitor them at all times or place them in their crate if they cannot be watched. Restrict access to rooms in the house so that the dog cannot sneak off and go to the bathroom.
- DO NOT rub their nose in the carpet, yell, or punish the dog when you notice an accident. Dogs do not understand the association between these punishments and the action of going to the bathroom in the house. If you notice an accident, thoroughly clean it up with an enzymatic cleaner (many are sold at local pet stores).
- If you catch your dog in the act of going to the bathroom in the house, interrupt them with a loud clap, just enough to startle them but not scare them. Immediately and quickly take them outside. Reward them when they go to the bathroom outside.
- Stay outside with your dog, or watch them from a window, to make sure that they actually go to the bathroom when they are outside. Sometimes dogs get distracted outside and "forget" that they need to go to the bathroom. If you suspect that this is the case, put your dog immediately back in their crate for one minute. If your dog is not crate trained, you can put them on a leash and walk them around with you inside the house for a minute. Once one minute has passed, bring your dog immediately back outside. This one minute break from being outside can help to remind them that they need to go to the bathroom. By placing them in their crate or on a leash during this minute, you are restricting their opportunity to go to the bathroom inside the house.
- Set a kitchen timer for every 30-45 minutes and take your dog outside every time the timer goes off. By taking your dog out this frequently, you are providing them with structure and you are limiting the opportunities for them to go to the bathroom in the house. Log the times when your dog goes to the bathroom to help you determine how frequently your dog needs to go outside. Until your dog learns to notify you when they have to go to the bathroom, it will be your responsibility to take them outside this frequently.