



Toilet training

Puppies bladders are very small and as such, can not hold a lot of urine before they need to be emptied.

In order to teach your puppy to empty their bladder and bowel in the correct place, you must ensure you give them ample opportunity to do so. It is purely a case of getting them to practice the right behaviour in the right place as much as possible.

Puppies will need to go to the toilet after:

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Playing

And during the day up to every half an hour in between.

You will learn to read your puppies behaviour and see signs that he is about to go to the toilet. He may begin sniffing, or suddenly stop playing and run off. If this happens, get your puppy outside ASAP!

Puppies usually like to 'toilet' on a grassy area. If you want your puppy to go in the same area all the time, ensure you take them there and praise when it happens. Once that area starts to smell of wee and poo they are more likely to use that spot anyway.

If you have a garden lacking in grass and your pup is reluctant to go, it may be worth buying some lengths of turf and laying them down even as a temporary measure until such time that they can last for longer and you can take them elsewhere to evacuate bladder and bowel.

When you take your puppy in to your garden to relieve themselves, try not to engage too much with them. Puppies can forget what they are suppose to be doing!

As soon as they go, praise them and then go indoors again.

If you have been outside with your puppy and they have not performed for 15 minutes or so. Take them back inside but at this point restrict their activity and space. You could try one of the following:

- Put them in their crate
 - Put them on your lap
 - Put them in a puppy play pen
 - Put them in a room where their bed is and ensure you close the space right down
- Most puppies will not want to go to the toilet in their bed. (something their mother has already taught them). Therefore, watch your puppy closely for signs that they do need to go and then immediately take them outside and wait for them to go to the toilet.

Repeat this process until the puppy goes to the toilet in the garden. At this point praise, and then take the puppy into the house and allow them more freedom.

Overnight

Puppies can last longer during the night. However, do not expect them to be able to hold on for the whole night to start with. It is almost a physical impossibility. (Although some do!)

Ensure you allow the puppy to 'toilet' immediately before you put them to bed. Go outside with them and ensure this happens.

It is up to you where you want your puppy to sleep at night, however, to start with, we would strongly advise that you take your pup upstairs with you and have them maybe in a crate beside your bed. This is because it will help to settle your puppy by making them feel more safe and secure. Remember they are pack animals and have just been separated from their mother and littermates. It will also greatly help in toilet training your puppy. Whenever you start to hear your puppy stir, quickly put on your slippers and dressing gown and get the puppy out asap. Once they have gone to the toilet, put the puppy back into the crate with minimal fuss and settle back to sleep. Repeat as often as necessary,

As the nights progress, sleep deprivation will start to kick in so you will begin to take longer to wake, get your slippers on and get outside. Hopefully your puppy will start to realise that he is about to be let out and will begin to hold and strengthen his bladder so that eventually he is able to hold on all night.

Once this has been achieved you can gradually move the crate away from the bedroom if you so wish.

Obviously, all puppies will toilet train at different rates. Some may be 'clean' in a few weeks whereas others will take several months to perfect this skill. Accidents will happen in the early stages and even when you thought you had cracked it, they may still have the odd accident here and there. Just take a deep breath. You will get there in the end.

Mistakes to avoid

Never scold, smack or 'rub your puppies nose in it' whenever they have an accident. Not only is this abuse but it will do nothing in teaching them to be toilet trained. What it will teach them is that you are a scary person to go to the toilet around and so they will start to hide from you to do it! It will also affect your relationship with them and ultimately you could have trouble with other training exercises such as you recall.

Whenever your puppy has an accident, just clean it up properly and remind yourself to watch your puppy more closely in future!

Avoid the use of paper and/or puppy pads as although they do save your floor, all it teaches your puppy is to go for a wee and a poo in the house!

If using a crate or puppy pen, ensure it is big enough to allow them to stand up and lay outstretched. Any bigger than this and you may create their own 'en suite'!