

TRAINING

houstraining at any age: CPDT Nicole Larocco-Skeehan's tricks for keeping carpets dry



Housebreaking is one of the first orders of business when training a puppy — but there's no need to stress if your newly adopted older dog needs a refresher course, too. The most important thing is to be attentive, consistent and use lots of positive reinforcement. Here's how to get started:



1 GET A ROOM **A crate is one of the easiest and most effective potty-training tools.**

It's a common misconception that dogs dislike being in a crate, as they actually have an instinctual desire to build a den. When introduced correctly, a crate can become your pup's favorite place in the house!

- ✓ **The crate can be made of wire or plastic** and should be large enough for your dog to stand up, lie down and turn in a circle comfortably.
- ✓ **A crate can be used as your dog's bed,** babysitter and time-out zone. If you have a dog who is not potty trained at home, he should be crated any time you are not directly supervising him.
- ✓ **Teach your dog that his crate is a relaxing and safe space** by giving him something fun to do while he is in there. Try a stuffed or frozen KONG® toy; both of these last much longer than a traditional dog biscuit and engage your dog's brain and body so he doesn't get bored.



2 RECOGNIZE PATTERNS

Though he may not verbalize it to you, your dog has ways of telling you he needs a potty break.

- ✓ **If your dog is engaged with you in a play** or petting situation and then suddenly walks away, it's time to take him out to potty.
- ✓ **If you see your dog sneak off to another room** where family members are not present, you can bet you're in for a surprise later!
- ✓ **If you notice your dog lingering by the door,** he probably needs to go out. Even if he doesn't, it's always better to err on the side of caution.

Remember that what goes in must come out — so if your dog has had a lot to eat or drink within the last hour, he may need an extra potty break, even if it's not in his regularly scheduled routine. Being vigilant during the training process will set you both up for success.





3 HAVE HAWK EYES **Too much freedom too soon is a mistake.**

If you're working on housebreaking, keep a watchful eye on your dog at all times. It's easier to prevent accidents than to make your dog un-learn where to go.

- ✓ **This may mean leashing your dog in the house or closing doors** to rooms you're not using to limit his access to them.
- ✓ **It may help to put a small bell or jangly tags on your dog's collar** to alert you if he starts to move. That way, if you're watching your favorite TV show while your dog sleeps at your feet, and all of a sudden you hear a bell moving away from you, you can run your pup out for a quick potty break.

★ MYTHBUSTERS: HOUS TRAINING EDITION ★

Here's the real story behind some common housetraining falsehoods.

~~do not~~ RUB HIS NOSE IN IT!

The only thing rubbing a dog's nose in an old urine spot will do is cause the dog to run away from you when you get upset over the next accident. And if you use this method, there will be another accident. Why? Because dogs live in the moment, so you cannot punish him now for what he did in the past, even if it was only five minutes ago. Next time you walk into a room and find an accident that's already happened, grab a rolled up newspaper — and hit yourself with it! Because you should have been watching your dog more closely in the first place.

dog training:
Saturday
at noon!

~~does not~~ HE KNOWS HE DID WRONG!

When you come into the room and find a puddle or, ahem, "present" on the floor, your dog pulls his ears back and gives you his best "I'm sorry" act. It's easy to believe that he knows what he did was wrong, but in reality, dogs don't have the cognitive capabilities to put that scenario together. What they can do is figure out patterns that happen in certain circumstances. For example:



So does your dog know that you are actually upset that he made the poo? Probably not. He just knows that he's in a room with poo, and you're mad!