



AKC S.T.A.R. PUPPYSM

Socialization★Training★Activity★Responsibility

HOUSETRAINING YOUR PUPPY

Housetraining will be one of the most important skills your puppy will learn. There are some very simple tips that will help with this process.

1. **Crate training.** By nature, dogs are very clean and they don't like to eliminate where they sleep or eat. The first step to housetraining your puppy is to crate train the puppy (see crate training lesson). If you choose to not use a crate, you'll want to have a way to confine the puppy to an area such as a small room or a section of a room. Baby gates across the doorway can be a good tool.
2. **Timing.** Remember, timing is everything when it comes to housetraining. The key to predicting when your puppy will need to eliminate is having **very consistent feeding times**. You should feed a consistent diet because changes in food can affect your puppy's bowel habits. If you feed the same food at the same time each day, you can predict approximately when your puppy will have a bowel movement.
3. **Scheduling.** Trips outside should be frequent and **the schedule for outside trips should be consistent**. It is commonly recommended that young puppies be taken outside to relieve themselves at least once an hour. If you have a work schedule that won't facilitate you taking your puppy out this often, understand that young puppies don't yet have control of their bladders and bowels and they may have accidents. They can't help this. Be patient when accidents happen. Quietly clean up the accident with cleaning products that will remove the smell.
4. **Reinforcing desired behaviors.** Rewards are important. When you take your puppy outside, be sure to **reward the puppy for eliminating (urinating or defecating) outdoors**. A treat and lavish praise will increase the likelihood the puppy will continue to eliminate outside.
5. **Providing exercise.** Activity plays a critical role in housetraining. Activity (such as running, playing, or walking on a leash) will increase your puppy's motility, meaning that exercise stimulates the bowels to move. A good walk in the morning or starting the day by playing with you in the yard will get your puppy off to a good start in the morning.

What Not To Do

Never punish your puppy for a housetraining accident. Rubbing a puppy's nose in urine or feces is abusive and will not help the training process. If you are having housetraining problems, your S.T.A.R. Puppy instructor can give you some advice. Your veterinarian can assist you with selecting the proper food and feeding schedule for your puppy.



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INDOOR HOUSETRAINING

Housetraining is one of the most important skills your puppy will learn. Most information on house-training is related to teaching a dog to go outside when nature calls. But there are some situations, particularly with city dogs, in which you'll want to teach a puppy to use papers or an indoor "puppy potty." With many puppies, the indoor set-up will serve as a safety net until the puppy can be transitioned to the outdoors. Remember that even when puppies are using papers, they still need plenty of socialization and opportunities for outdoor exercise.

1. Choose an area with a floor surface that is easy to clean (such as a tile doorway, kitchen or bathroom).

Cover the floor with plastic. You can use a piece of an old shower curtain. Put the newspapers on top of the plastic.

2. Alternatives to newspapers

If you don't want to use newspapers, pet stores sell "puppy pads" that are specifically designed for house-training. In addition to puppy pads, a number of companies have a product called a "dog potty." To decide if you'd rather use a commercial dog potty instead of papers, go to www.google.com Type "dog potty" in the search box and you'll be able to look at a number of commercial products.

3. Keep the area clean

When your puppy uses the papers, replace the dirty papers (or clean the potty) as soon as possible. If you catch your puppy using the papers, be sure to praise the puppy. White vinegar or special cleaning products from your local pet store can be used to remove odors.

4. Accidents happen

If you catch your puppy eliminating somewhere other than the paper, quickly pick the puppy up and rush to the paper. Don't yell at or scold the puppy. Praise the puppy for going on the paper.

5. Transitioning to the Outdoors

As they grow older, puppies will be able to control their bladders and bowels for longer periods of time. This will make it possible for you to get down the hall of a city high-rise, onto the elevator, and outside in plenty of time. Praise your puppy and give a treat for eliminating outside. If it is your goal to have a dog who does not use papers indoors, begin the housetraining process with frequent trips outside.

For more information on S.T.A.R. Puppy, see www.akc.org Type "STAR Puppy" in the search box.
