

The Ten Rules to Housetrain Your Dog in Ten Days.



Depending on your dog, your family and your lifestyle, housetraining a dog can be anywhere from easy, to almost impossible. Many dog owners get lucky and in spite of mistakes they unknowingly make, they find themselves with a housetrained dog. On the other hand, some dog owners need help from a dog trainer or dog behavior counselor. Even a small number of these pet owners may become desperate when everything they do, even under professional counsel, seems futile.

The more difficult housetraining cases to crack are those of dogs that, by mistake, have become 'reverse' housetrained by their owners. 'Reverse' housetraining results when dogs have been allowed to go to the bathroom inside the home and then been inadvertently reinforced for doing so. Another difficult housetraining example to correct includes puppies from pet stores, puppy mills and backyard breeders where the puppies have been raised in contained, unsanitary conditions. Since they have no alternative these puppies eat and sleep in the same area they use as their bathroom.

So, when you bring a new puppy or rescue dog into your home, or if you have an older dog that is not yet housetrained, follow our "Ten Rules to Housetraining" and you should be relieved (no pun intended) to find in ten days you have a housetrained dog.

Managing the Environment

1. The first thing you need to do before you start your housetraining plan is to ensure your home is free from urine stains and residual odors. Purchase a black light and a pet odor remover from your local pet store. When it is dark, turn off all the lights and thoroughly inspect your home, carpets, furniture and tiled area. The black light will reveal any old stains so you can effectively clean and remove them. There are many very effective pet stain/odor cleaning products available on the market.
2. If you don't already have one, purchase a good quality wire crate that is large enough for your dog to stand up, lie down and turn around in. Position the crate in a quiet, but not isolated part of your home. You will also need three Kongs (chew toys you can stuff with treats), a squeaky toy, a nylon collar and a 6 foot nylon leash.

3. Develop and follow a 24 hour management schedule of potty breaks. This is critical because you don't want your puppy to have an accident. Your schedule should include meals, play time, training time, bathroom breaks and sleep time for the entire 10 day program. Bathroom breaks should be scheduled every four hours except overnight when you can allow 6 hours. The plan should also include two or three feeding sessions, one in the morning, one midday and the last one no later than 6pm. Your dog should not have access to drinking water after 8pm or three hours before it goes into its crate to sleep for the night.
4. If you can't be home during the midday break, either schedule some time off work or hire a dog walker or pet sitter that can help you with that portion of your housetraining schedule. This will be vital for success.
5. Keep a daily journal on your dog's eating schedule and bathroom habits. Note when your dog urinates and defecates. Note the exact time your dog eats and any other treats it is given during the day. Your journal will help you determine how long after eating and drinking your dog typically needs to use the bathroom. You can use this information to adjust your schedule if necessary.
6. Your dog's day will include meals, sleep, play, training and bathroom breaks. During each of these periods the dog is either in its crate or tethered to you. Give your dog a Kong stuffed with yummy treats for mental enrichment while it is in its crate. Your dog must be supervised 100% of the time during the housetraining period. When the dog is tethered to you, watch for signs of needing to go to the bathroom. If you notice your dog sniffing the ground, walking in circles or looking uncomfortable then quickly take the dog outside to its designated bathroom area and follow rule number 7.

Training the Behavior

7. At the scheduled bathroom times take your dog from its crate, on a leash, and take it to its designated bathroom area. Keep your dog on its 6 foot leash but let it explore while you stand in one spot. Initially ignore your dog. Because your dog isn't getting any attention from you and there will be limited things of interest to explore in the restricted area defined by the leash, your dog will eventually go to the bathroom.
8. Once your dog has finished, praise it with 'good doggie.' Give it lots of attention and treats. Have a little celebration with your dog. This lets your dog know that its behavior is remarkable and deserves praise. You MUST create a situation where your dog wants to go to the bathroom in that particular area.
9. Only after your dog has been to the bathroom should it be let off the leash to play or taken for its 'long' walk. This ensures that your dog will soon learn that the more quickly it completes its bathroom behavior the more quickly it gets its reward of treats, play, its walk or all three. ALWAYS exercise or play with or train your dog for at least ten minutes before you take it back inside to its crate.

Developing the Relationship

10. Show your dog you are a trusting and benevolent leader. Never punish your dog for mistakes. Your dog's accidents are your accidents. If, as described in rule 6, you notice your dog displaying signs of needing the bathroom while inside and you are slow getting your dog outside, simply get their attention with a loud clap of your hands and immediately take your dog outside to their bathroom area (you can clean up any inside accident later).

When dogs are exposed to consistent, accident-free housetraining systems you will be surprised at how quickly they learn. With the right level of commitment and conscientious use of a training schedule you can train a dog to be solidly housetrained in ten days.



The DogSmith Recommended Housetraining Plan

Please note that the time blocks will be determined by your puppy's age and your individual schedule, waking time, working hours and bedtime. The DogSmith suggests that if you have had housetraining problems already stick to this program for a week and ensure the puppy is accident free, and then using your daily log you can adjust the schedule. After collecting bathroom habit data for a week you will be able to accurately determine, based on meal times, when your puppy needs to go to the bathroom.

Time Range	Action	Tips	Actual – check defecation/urination and other comments
<p>First thing in the morning. Between 6am and 7.30 am take your puppy outside straight from their crate</p>	<p>Take puppy outside for a bathroom break on a leash and to the designated area. Stand firmly in the designated area until your puppy goes to the bathroom. Praise the bathroom behavior and reward with a treat and love. Play/walk your dog after he/she goes to the bathroom.</p> <p>Feed puppy on return/ Crate puppy</p> <p><i>The DogSmith suggests hand feeding the puppy and incorporating a lure-reward training session into meal times. Focus training on simple but important behaviors such as Sit, Down & Name Recognition exercises.</i></p>	<p>Do not bring your puppy straight back inside after going to the bathroom. The puppy may learn that bathroom behavior means that their freedom ends when they go back inside immediately.</p> <p><i>Note: you must go outside with your puppy</i></p>	<p>Poop</p> <p>Urine</p> <p>Comment</p>

<p>Within one hour after eating breakfast Between 7am and 8.30am</p>	<p>Take puppy outside for a bathroom break on a leash and to the designated area. Stand firmly in the designated area until the puppy goes to the bathroom Praise bathroom behavior and reward with a treat and love. Play/walk the dog after the puppy goes to the bathroom and then put the puppy into the crate.</p>	<p>Do not bring your puppy straight back inside after going to the bathroom. The puppy may learn that bathroom behavior means that their freedom ends when they go back inside immediately.</p>	<p>Poop Urine Comment</p>
<p>Midday Between 11am and 12.30pm</p>	<p>Take puppy outside for a bathroom break on a leash and to the designated area. Stand firmly in the designated area until your puppy goes to the bathroom. Praise bathroom behavior and reward with a treat and love. Play/walk the dog after he/she goes to the bathroom.</p> <p><i>The DogSmith suggests hand feeding the puppy and incorporating a lure-reward training session into meal times. Focus training on simple but important behaviors such as Sit, Down & Name Recognition exercises.</i></p>	<p>Do not bring your puppy straight back inside after going to the bathroom. The puppy may learn that bathroom behavior means that their freedom ends when they go back inside immediately.</p>	<p>Poop Urine Comment</p>
<p>LATE Afternoon Between 3pm and 4.30pm</p>	<p>Take puppy outside for a bathroom break on a leash and to the designated area. Stand firmly in the designated area until your puppy goes to the bathroom. Praise bathroom behavior and reward with a treat and love. Play/walk the dog after he/she goes to the bathroom.</p> <p>Feed puppy on return and Crate puppy</p> <p><i>The DogSmith suggests hand feeding the puppy and incorporating a lure-reward training session into meal times. Sit, Down, Name Recognition</i></p>	<p>Do not bring your puppy straight back inside after going to the bathroom. The puppy may learn that bathroom behavior means that their freedom ends when they go back inside immediately.</p>	<p>Poop Urine Comment</p>
<p>EARLY Evening Between 7pm and 8pm</p>	<p>Take puppy outside for a bathroom break on a leash and to the designated area. Stand firmly in the designated area until your puppy goes to the bathroom. Praise bathroom behavior and reward with a treat and love. Play/walk the dog after he/she goes to the bathroom.</p> <p>Remove water from the puppy's crate.</p>	<p>Do not bring your puppy straight back inside after going to the bathroom. The puppy may learn that bathroom behavior means that their freedom ends when they go back inside immediately.</p>	<p>Poop Urine Comment</p>

<p>LATE Evening Just before bedtime</p>	<p>Take puppy outside for a bathroom break on a leash and to the designated area. Stand firmly in the designated area until the puppy goes to the bathroom Praise bathroom behavior and reward with a treat and love. Play/walk the dog after the puppy goes to the bathroom.</p> <p>Return the puppy to the crate for bedtime</p>	<p>Do not bring your puppy straight back inside after going to the bathroom. The puppy may learn that bathroom behavior means that their freedom ends when they go back inside immediately.</p>	<p>Poop Urine Comment</p>
<p>NIGHT Time</p> <p>The importance of the night time bathroom break will be determined by the age of the puppy and its ability to hold its bladder during the night.</p>	<p>Take puppy outside for a bathroom break on a leash and to the designated area. Play with the puppy until she goes to the bathroom. Praise bathroom behavior and reward with a treat and love. Play for several minutes after puppy goes to the bathroom.</p>	<p>Do not bring your puppy straight back inside after going to the bathroom. The puppy may learn that bathroom behavior means that their freedom ends when they go back inside immediately.</p>	<p>Poop Urine Comment</p>