



HOUSE BREAKING

If you're having some problems house breaking your puppy, you're not alone. Some dogs train more easily than others. The sooner your puppy begins the "patterns" of house breaking the better, so that bad habits don't develop and become a permanent problem. Here are some suggestions:

CRATE TRAINING is the key. Confine your puppy to a crate or kennel whenever he is not being closely watched, up to four hours at a time. Train your pup that the crate is a positive place to be by giving him a treat every single time he goes in it. Have him go in and out of the crate for short periods of time, up to 20 times per day. Give treats and praise each time. The kennel/crate should be just big enough for him to turn around and lay down in. Any larger and he'll use one end for his bathroom and the other end to sleep in. If your puppy is habitually soiling his kennel first try removing any bedding material that may be in there. Second, you may try feeding him his meals in the kennel. If you are still not seeing some success, please call River Valley Veterinary Service and speak with a Certified Veterinary Technician. It is possible there is an underlying medical condition that requires attention. Kennel confinement encourages the dog to hold his urine and bowel as long as possible. Dogs are generally very clean animals. They will tend not to soil the area where they sleep or eat.

FREQUENT TRIPS OUTSIDE are a must. After a meal, a nap, playtime, etc. You **MUST** go outside with your pup, preferably to the same spot every time. Give the pup a command, "Bingo, potty." If it is possible try using the same door to go out to potty and use another door for playing or going for a walk. Do not play; you're out there for business and play behavior should occur in another area of the yard. If he relieves himself, PRAISE him, REWARD him. If he doesn't go within five minutes, take him back inside, watch him closely (kenneling him if you cannot keep an eagle eye on him) and plan to be back outside again within the next half hour.

ACCIDENTS WILL HAPPEN but must ONLY be reprimanded if the puppy is **caught in the act**. You will only confuse your puppy and slow the training process if you scold him for an accident you didn't see occur. Dogs do not feel "guilty." Rather, they are fearful when they anticipate a scolding. Bad habits will not improve unless the pup associates the punishment with the crime. When you do catch your pup in the middle of an accident, startle him. Clap your hands, yell "No Potty – Outside!" Please do NOT spank him or rub his nose in it. DO take him right outside and repeat lesson #2. Give your puppy every chance to do it right and remember to reward him with praise and a treat for job done right.

Do NOT reprimand accidents which occur in the kennel; this means he had to go. As he grows older he will be able to hold his urine and stool longer. Clean the area well. It is reasonable to expect that most 10-12 week old pups can wait 4-5 hours. Full control of the bladder doesn't occur until about four months of age. If your puppy cannot keep his kennel clean please contact River Valley Veterinary Service.

SCHEDULED MEALS will also aid in the house breaking process. Three times a day offer your puppy his dry food. Pick up the food dish if he doesn't eat within 5 minutes. When he is hungry he'll eat until satisfied and then walk away. In a young pup a trip outside is usually necessary within 20 minutes of eating. These scheduled meals will help aid in potty training as stools can be somewhat predicted.

Most puppies train by 14-16 weeks of age, if you are persistent. Those puppies who are having continued accidents outside the kennel usually do not have enough supervision or their owners are unwilling to increase the use of a crate.

Please call us if you are having difficulty in achieving success in house breaking your puppy. Good Luck!