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HOUSETRAINING HINTS

The puppy must earn his freedom:

- Supervise the puppy constantly when he is loose in the house.
- Confine the puppy properly whenever you cannot supervise him.

Types of acceptable confinement include:

- Small, portable dog crate - when you are around to hear the puppy ask to go outside
- Safely fenced backyard or kennel
- A small area in the utility room or kitchen that has been boarded off so the puppy cannot injure himself or destroy property.
- Bathroom with floor protected

Reward the puppy properly for relieving himself outside.

Take the puppy outside (on a leash) and praise the puppy when he relieves himself. Take the puppy to the same area of the yard for toilet purposes each time. Use a verbal cue such as "Hurry Up," "Go Potty," "Do your Business," etc. Say this in a gentle, quiet tone of voice. In the beginning, this will mean nothing to the dog, so do NOT become upset when he fails to respond. After 2-3 weeks, he will start to understand if his eliminating is followed by warm, sincere praise.

Keep his toilet area picked up except for the most recent stool.

Give the puppy approximately 10 minutes to relieve himself. Do not form the habit of waiting 20-30 minutes for the puppy to eliminate. After he is consistently relieving himself within 10 minutes, gradually over a period of several weeks shorten the time span to 5 minutes.

Do not reprimand the puppy for failing to relieve himself!

Have the puppy on a schedule for his meals and outdoor breaks.

Feed a high quality food. Feed the puppy all it will eat in 10-15 minutes 3 times each day.

Do not leave food down all day for him to nibble on. Continual input leads to continual output! If the puppy is fed on a precise schedule 7 days a week, his bowel movements will become very predictable.

High quality foods produce much less stool.

You get what you pay for in dog food. High quality foods are priced higher because they have much better quality (and digestible) ingredients. Cheaper foods use poorer quality ingredients, which are much less digestible and therefore produce more stools. We recommend feeding any NAME BRAND dog foods such as Purina, Pedigree, Iams, Nutro, and Science Diet.

Take the puppy outside after:

- Each meal
- Anytime he drinks water
- When he wakes up in the morning or from a nap
- When he plays hard, gets excited, or chews hard on his toys
- When he has a scheduled break
- When he gives you “intention signals” by **CIRCLING** or **SNIFFING**.

Pick the puppy up and carry him outside if he is small. Do not rush at the puppy and frighten him. Do not yell or threaten him. Simply get him outside as quickly and calmly as possible. Young puppies in the 8-12 week range will need to go out every 1-2 hours. Pups in the 12-16 week range will need to go out every 2-3 hours.

Do not expect a young puppy to tell you when he has to go out by barking at the door!

If you have taken the puppy out and he does not relieve himself, when you bring him back in, put him back in his crate or keep him on a leash with you and take him back out in 20-30 minutes. Do not let him wander through the house unsupervised after an unproductive trip outside. (Sometimes puppies are distracted and actually forget why they are outside or that they needed to relieve themselves.)

Bedtime:

No food for 2 hours before bedtime. Take the puppy outside for a break the last thing before bedtime. Place the puppy in the crate. (It is best to remove all collars & halters to avoid injury) Show no attention to the puppy once it is placed in the crate. Any attention you show (even yelling at it) simply tells the puppy that if it whines or cries, you will show it more attention.. Later, after the puppy is thoroughly trained, many people will simply leave the door of the crate open (or even take the top of the crate off) and use this as the permanent bed for the puppy. Most puppies will make it through the night without accidents if they are confined, but take them out immediately upon waking. The fact that the puppy can go 8 hours at night does not mean it can go 8 hours during the daytime.

Crate training depends upon the instinct of dogs to keep their beds clean. Dogs are “den” animals. Their own private place gives them a sense of security. **CONFINEMENT IS NOT CRUEL UNLESS ABUSED.** A puppy does not want a mess in his bed and then have to sleep in it! The crate should not be so large that he can relieve himself in one end and then sleep in the other, or he will do so. If too large of a crate is used, a divider can be constructed to place in the crate to make it smaller until the puppy grows to the size requiring the entire crate.

Introduce the puppy to the crate as soon as it is brought home. The cage should be left open so that the puppy can voluntarily enter the cage for food, water, toys, or shelter. By making all cage

experiences pleasant, the puppy should feel secure and comfortable in its cage. For the crate to remain a positive, enjoyable retreat, the dog should never be placed in the cage for punishment. If social isolation or “time-out” techniques are used for punishment, an area such as a washroom, laundry room, or basement might work best.

Corrections for housetraining accidents must be made at the time the puppy is in the act of making the mistake!

- If you feel the necessity to punish someone when you find a mistake after the fact, punish the person who was supposed to be watching the puppy.
- A dog can only understand scolding and praise if it occurs within a half second of the event you are trying to control. Catching a puppy “in the act” is the best time to scold or praise. After the event has occurred, it is too late to scold, or praise, because the puppy will associate your feedback with whatever he is doing at the time. Rubbing his nose in his mistakes is a worthless technique and only confuses the dog.
- Dogs need to relieve themselves after eating, sleeping and playing.
- Feed your puppy the same time every day. This will help keep the dog’s digestive system regular and it will be easier to predict when he needs to go out.

Corrections are made in the following manner:

Say the word “**NO**” in a firm, low tone of voice. Do not use the puppy’s name. Walk over to the puppy, take hold of him by the scruff of the neck, and turn him around so he is looking at the mistake. Give the puppy a short (2-3 sentences), verbal reprimand while he is looking at the mistake. Do not “rub his nose in it.” Do not yell, scream, hit, shake, threaten, slap, or in any other way react and frighten him. The reprimand is made in a firm, low-pitched tone of voice.

Clean up the mistake thoroughly using an odor neutralizer.

If the puppy urinates submissively (as he wiggles as he greets you or as he is being punished for Misbehavior), do not punish him because he cannot control that behavior. Most dogs will outgrow this as they mature.

Common mistakes to avoid:

Giving the puppy too much unsupervised freedom while loose in the house.

Excessive reliance on punishment will not only impede housetraining but may also damage his emotional stability.

Remember, your puppy is an infant. It is your job to teach it to want to be housetrained. Training not only takes effort and attention, it also takes time and patience. Puppies are just like “babies in diapers.” It takes time for the puppy to grow to the point that it can control its eliminations.

Paper training:

If the puppy will not be allowed outside for eliminations, cover a large area with newspaper to be used as the toilet area. Once the puppy selects a favorite location, the papered area can be made smaller.