

Crate Training

Every puppy needs to learn the skill of resting calmly in a crate. It is an excellent way to teach your dog good behavior as well as give your dog their own space. Benefits of crate training include:

- Prevents damage to your furniture and other household goods valuables while you are away or sleeping
- Helps teach your dog proper chewing and elimination behavior
- Provides security for your dog and safety for young children in your home
- Ease while traveling
- Reduced stress when crated for restricted activity from illness

Before you begin crate training, keep in mind that the crate should be large enough for your dog to stand up and turn around in. Pet store carry many different sized and styles of crates so you can find the one that fits your dog best. You should place the crate in a room where there is activity - family room, kitchen, etc - because dogs are social animals. Finally, the crate should be used as your pets retreat or safe place. It should NOT be used for punishment. The crate can be used to avoid problems by containing your dog and create a separate space to be used for "time-outs."

Crate Training Puppies

Begin crate training with your puppy early in the day so he/she has the whole day to adapt. Place favorite treats, toys, and/or food in the crate to motivate your puppy to enter on their own. The first time you confine your puppy to the crate, they should be ready to nap; schedule after a play session and potty break. Leave the room but be close enough to hear. It is normal for your puppy to cry or whine at first. It is important to no reward these behaviors by letting them out when they cry. It may be difficult, but wait until the crying has stopped before releasing from the kennel. You want your puppy to discover that nothing bad happens while being left alone in the kennel but that it's ok to alert you of a need.

Don't trick your puppy about the crate. Give a treat when they go in, but don't be sneaky about shutting the door. This can cause the puppy to distrust the crate and you. If your puppy isn't making it through the night without a potty break you might need to schedule a break until they are able to.

Crate Training Adult Dogs

Except for the introduction of your dog to their crate, crate training an adult dog is similar to crate training a puppy. Set up your dog's crate in their feeding area and leave the door open for a few days. Place food, treats, and toys in the crate so the dog is motivated to enter on their own. Close the crate door only after your dog fully enters the crate on their own.

As with puppies, your dog may cry or whine at first. Use the same correction methods given for training puppies with your adult dog. Gradually increase the amount of time that your dog must remain quiet in the crate before