

CRATE TRAINING

Crates are a wonderful management tool for dogs, it is helpful to assist with housetraining, allows you to keep your puppy safe when they cannot be directly supervised and is a safe place for them to retreat. Here are some guidelines to follow to ensure your puppy loves their crate:

CRATE CHOICES: Choose a crate with covered sides, if you use a metal crate your puppy may be more comfortable having the crate covered with a blanket. Alternatively, using an exercise pen (x-pen) or baby gating a room can give your puppy more space. This can also allow you to place the crate, elimination area and feeding station in the barricaded space. This also prevents you from having to confine your dog to their crate for a longer duration than they are comfortable and risk having them make a negative association with their crate.

COMFORT. Provide your puppy with a soft blanket or crate bed and water at all times.

APPROPRIATELY SIZED. Your crate should be big enough for your dog to move around comfortably, stand up, turn around and stretch out on their side. Room for water and a crate safe food puzzle toy, such as a KONG is recommended.

TIME: Crate training takes time. Guidelines for the duration that a puppy should be expected to hold their bladder is their age in months, plus one. So, if your puppy is 2 months old, they will need a potty break at LEAST every 3 hours. Remember every puppy is an individual and this time can vary, some puppies may need more frequent breaks.

BEDTIME: Few puppies are comfortable being crated overnight away from their owners. This can cause undue stress for puppies and create a negative association with their crate. It is recommended to either place the crate near your bed, or to have your puppy in an x-pen near your bed. Your puppy is also able to sleep in your bed if they can get on and off the bed safely and elimination accidents are not a concern. Owners should be prepared to get up through the night if their puppy requires a bathroom break.

DAILY TRAINING SESSION

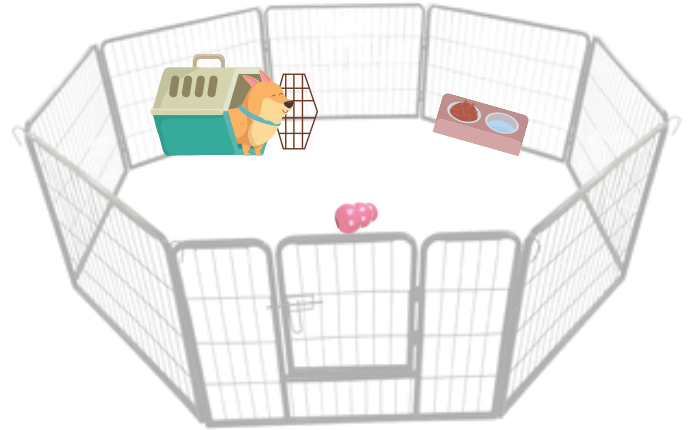
- 1** Place treats close to and inside the crate for multiple training sessions. When your puppy is comfortable going in and out of the crate, begin to close the door slowly, feed a few treats through crate bars, then let your puppy out and repeat. Training sessions should be 5-10 min, twice daily.
- 2** If your puppy is comfortable going in and out of the crate, wait for them to enter the crate, click and toss your treat out of the crate. Wait until they re-enter and click and treat, repeat.
- 3** Over-time you can increase the time your puppy stays in the crate before clicking and treating and include a cue "kennel up" as your puppy is walking into the crate.



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CREATING A POSITIVE ASSOCIATION

- ✓ Giving a food puzzle toy (such as a Kong) multiple times a day in your puppy's confinement space is a great way to help your puppy make a positive association with their crate, reinforce independence and duration.
- ✓ It is also recommended to offer a food puzzle toy about 5-10 minutes before you leave your house. This will help your puppy associate your departure with something positive and help keep them mentally stimulated while they are alone. In addition, videotaping departures is recommended to ensure your puppy is comfortable being left alone.
- ✓ "Crate Fairy"- randomly place high value treats in your dog's crate throughout the day when they aren't watching. When they choose to enter their crate, they will be surprised with a delicious treat.



DO NOT use your crate for punishment; this is supposed to be a safe place for your puppy. Using it for punishment will teach your puppy to make a negative association with their crate.

If your dog is vocalizing, panting, pacing, paws at the doors and/or does not want to go into their crate please contact your veterinarian.

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS COMPANION VETERINARY CLINIC'S CRATE TRAINING VIDEO](#)