

POTTY TRAINING PUPPIES & ADULT DOGS

PROPER PAWS DOG TRAINING

Potty training requires a plan, patience, and observation. Creating a consistent routine, closely supervising your dog, and learning their individual signals will help prevent accidents while teaching them exactly what is expected in their new home.

POTTY TRAINING YOUR PUPPY

Routine is essential when potty training a puppy. Always take your puppy outside **when they wake up, after meals, after playtime or naps, and before bed**. During the day, begin by taking them outside approximately every 45 minutes while awake and gradually increase the time between breaks as they become successful. A helpful guideline is **approximately one hour per month of age**, meaning a two-month-old puppy should be able to hold it for two hours. This is a goal to work toward, not where you should start. Every puppy is different, so increase the time gradually based on your puppy's individual success. When your puppy isn't in a crate or playpen, **keep them on a leash with you**. This prevents them from wandering away to have an accident and allows you to recognize the signals they give when they need to go outside.

POTTY TRAINING AN ADULT DOG

Some adult dogs may have never been fully potty trained, while others may simply need help learning the expectations and routine of a new home. **Treat your adult dog as though you are potty training a puppy**. Provide frequent opportunities to go outside, supervise closely indoors, and limit unsupervised freedom. Adult dogs often progress through this process much faster than puppies, so gradually increase the time between potty breaks and household freedom as your dog demonstrates consistent success. If an adult dog continues having accidents, return to a more frequent potty schedule and tighter supervision before increasing freedom again. **Let your dog's success determine how quickly you progress**.

LEARN YOUR DOG'S SIGNALS

Part of successful potty training is learning how your individual dog communicates that they need to go outside. **Walking toward the door, pacing, suddenly sniffing the floor, wandering away, or circling** are common signals. Take your dog outside whenever you notice these behaviors. Responding consistently helps them learn that communicating their need to go outside works. Do not allow your dog to wander unattended while they're still learning. Dogs often choose quiet, low-traffic areas such as **guest rooms, basements, formal dining rooms, or hallways** to have accidents when given too much freedom too soon.

WHEN ACCIDENTS HAPPEN

Accidents are information, not something your dog should be punished for. If you catch your dog in the act, calmly interrupt them, take them outside, and reward them if they finish there. If you discover an accident after it has already happened, **do not discipline or correct your dog**. They will not associate the correction with the earlier accident. Instead, an accident usually tells you that **too much freedom was given, too much time passed between potty breaks, or a signal was missed**. Adjust your schedule or supervision and continue moving forward. Clean accidents thoroughly with an enzymatic cleaner to prevent lingering odors from encouraging your dog to return to the same location.

REMEMBER

Successful potty training is less about correcting accidents and more about **preventing them while creating as many opportunities for success as possible**. Keep your routine consistent, supervise closely, pay attention to your dog's communication, and increase their freedom as they demonstrate they're ready. **The more often your dog practices the right behavior, the faster that behavior becomes a habit.**

