

General Housebreaking Guidelines

1. *Teach your puppy where you would like him to eliminate.* This can be anywhere from a very specific spot in your backyard to the entire front yard. Be sure to calmly praise your puppy immediately after he "goes" in the correct area. Avoid praising him while he is still eliminating, however, because this may cause him to stop before he is entirely finished.

2. *Don't "punish" your puppy for housebreaking accidents.* Punishing is counterproductive and will frequently teach your puppy some other unwanted behaviors. For example, if you rub your puppy's nose in his urine, or if you yell, hit or berate him, your puppy will just learn to avoid eliminating near you. This may lead your puppy to refuse to "go" when you take him out; he may sneak off to "go" in another room when you are not looking.

3. *Clean accidents correctly.* It is important always to clean up any "accidents" with an odor-neutralizing product such as Nature's Miracle. Soap and/or other cleaning

products will not get rid of the odor. Using only soap will increase the chance that your puppy will relieve himself in the same area again.

3. *Set up a schedule.* Whether housebreaking a puppy or an adult dog who has never been housebroken, be sure to take him out immediately after *each* of the following events: waking up, getting up from resting, drinking water, eating, playing, training, and actively sniffing.

4. *Keep your schedule.* Try to keep your schedule consistent, even on the weekends.

5. *Be consistent.* You should always take the puppy out the same door to relieve himself in the same area.

6. *Take the training to the next step.* Once your puppy has been "accident free" while following the above schedule, begin to teach the puppy to hold his bladder a little past the time he may need to go. While crate training helps develop your dog's ability to hold his bladder, he must also learn to do this even when he is loose in the house. Keeping the puppy close to you on a leash at or near the time he is normally scheduled to be taken out will teach him to

"hold it" for a bit longer. You can also watch the puppy closely; when he starts to sniff, distract him for a few moments by tossing a toy before taking him out.

Before teaching the puppy to hold his bladder, the puppy should be accident-free for a minimum of 14 days in a row. Every "mistake" the puppy makes sets you back three days. For example, if your puppy has been accident-free for eight days and then makes a mistake on the ninth day, you must begin counting from the fifth day.

*** Puppies with housebreaking problems that persist for over a week with no reasonable explanation should be examined by your veterinarian to rule out a medical reason for the housebreaking difficulty. Adult dogs who are only having "accidents" of one kind or the other (only urine or only feces) should also be examined.



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Polite Paws™ training programs teach your dog to accept you as a benevolent leader. The end result will be that your dog will learn to listen to your cues while you eliminate or reduce unacceptable behavior challenges. This will be accomplished while keeping your dog's tail wagging!

The owner of Polite Paws, LLC, Shannon Sumner, is a proud graduate of the Animal Behavior College (ABC) of Northridge, California. She is a certified dog trainer and a professional member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers.

Shannon enjoys helping others realize the potential their dogs have. Utilizing a variety of training methods, predominantly positive reinforcement, Shannon offers dogs the opportunity to show off how terrific they can be!

Having opened the eyes of many dog owners, Shannon can help you understand what it takes to have "polite paws" in your home. Contact her to begin your training today!



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Housetraining

Housetraining, or housebreaking, is one of the most important first steps to training your puppy. The basic principles of housetraining are relatively simple, although applying those principles to individual circumstances can sometimes be a little tricky and even frustrating! Follow these guidelines to help teach your puppy how to "potty" in the desired location.

- Praise your puppy for "going" in the right spot!
- Set up your puppy to succeed; take him out often!
- Don't punish the puppy for mistakes.
- Be consistent in your behavior.



Puppy and Dog Training