

HOUSETRAINING MADE EASY

Congratulations on adopting your new family member!

As your adoption counselor explained to you, your new dog has had previous problems with housetraining. Some dogs have had housetraining issues in their previous homes and many shelter dogs have had their housetraining disrupted by their stay in the shelter. Housetraining issues are very common in dogs. In fact, it is the number one behavior problem seen in dogs after adoption. Luckily, most dogs can be easily housetrained.

If you follow the guidelines below, your dog will have an easier time adjusting to your home and schedule and you will be able to have a safe, happy, and long-lasting relationship with your new friend.

MAKE IT EASY FOR YOUR NEW DOG TO USE THE TOILET AREA

- Select one toilet area outside for your dog. Not only is this aesthetically more pleasing but it will speed up the housetraining process. Paper training may be beneficial for small dogs. Put the papers in one area that is always accessible.
- Take your dog to the toilet area several times daily (every two to three hours to start) on a leash. Do so especially after waking up, five to ten minutes after eating a meal, after greeting new people, after active play, and right before you go to bed.
- Take delicious treats with you to your dog's toilet area. When your dog eliminates, immediately reward him or her with a treat and praise.
- Do not spend too much time waiting for your dog to perform. Five or ten minutes is sufficient. If nothing is produced during that time, confine or tether your dog for five minutes inside and then bring your dog back to the toilet area. If you let your dog free during this time, he or she will pick an area inside.
- Have a regular schedule for your dog's meals to encourage more predictable elimination patterns. To make it easier for your dog to make it through the night, make the last feeding before 6:00 PM.
- Teach your dog to eliminate on command. When you take your dog to the toilet area and the search begins for the right spot, say the cue word "hurry up", "do your business", or another phrase. Soon the phrase will bring on elimination.
- See your dog as an individual. Dogs are housetrained at different rates. Some dogs have great holding ability and become housetrained quickly; other dogs may not have that same holding ability and may become housetrained more slowly. This is normal!

USE A COMFORTABLE AREA OF CONFINEMENT WHEN YOU CAN'T SUPERVISE YOUR DOG

- When you cannot supervise your dog, confine him or her to a safe, comfortable area, or tether him in a safe place. Your dog will be unlikely to eliminate in his area of confinement due to the canine instinct of not soiling where the dog sleeps and eats. You can use a crate (see [this web page](#)), exercise pen, or a

corner of your bathroom or kitchen gated off. When your dog is confined, you will also be able to know that he or she is safe.

- Do not leave your new dog in the area of confinement for long periods of time. Other than overnight, try not to keep your dog in the area for more than four hours at a time. Dogs are very social and active animals and require lots of companionship, play, and exercise.
- When your new dog is outside the area of confinement, watch him or her. Tethering your dog to you will help you have a more watchful eye. If you see your dog begin to eliminate, clap your hands and immediately take to the toilet area. Praise your dog for using the proper area. Never punish your dog after the fact or push his or her nose into the stool or urine or hit your dog. Not only is this method ineffective but it can also cause your dog to be afraid of you.

AND FOR YOU!

- Use enzymatic products, which neutralize urine odor, when cleaning up accidents.
- Learn from your dog's accidents. Keep good written records so that you can predict when your dog needs to eliminate.

If you are not successful housetraining, please call your adoption counselor! He or she will be able to direct you to a person who can help you.