

TOILET TRAINING

When puppies have to go, they have to go. That usually means as soon as they wake up, a few minutes after every meal, and at regular intervals in between. Your puppy's only concern is to do it away from where they eat and sleep – they don't instinctively know that you'd prefer they went outside.

If you can dedicate yourself to the task with non-stop vigilance and lots of patience, you can house train your puppy in just a few days.

Start straight away

Start the moment you get home together. With their lead on, put your puppy on some newspaper or a puppy toilet training mat or better still the grass at the spot in the garden you'd like them to use. For the puppy finding a place to go to toilet is scent related and by taking your puppy to the same place he will develop an association with the designated area and relieving himself. Tell your puppy what to do, with a command like 'toilet', wait (and wait and wait) until they go, then praise them thoroughly and offer a tasty treat.

Watch for the "circle and sniff"

Each time you see your puppy start to "circle and sniff", spring into action. Get them outside on a newspaper or puppy toilet training mat or the grass and give the command, then follow up with praise and a treat. They will also want to go to toilet after play and games so take them straight outside.

Be extra patient

After a few days, they'll get the idea and give a bark or two to warn you. Just make sure you're extra patient. Accidents will happen, so keep a generous supply of newspapers or puppy mats spread around the house and clean up quickly – any lingering smells will encourage repeat behaviour. When faced with an accident and you are present just put the puppy outside while you clean it up. Chastising the puppy will just cause him/her to do it in a place you can't find it in future. If you find an accident and you weren't present just clean it up. If you chastise the puppy they will not understand why you are in a bad mood.

Work out their toilet schedule

You'll soon figure out how often your puppy needs to go outside – depending on their size, it could be every two hours, every hour or every half hour.

If they sometimes seem to do nothing but circle and sniff, you'll have to keep on taking them outside until they're properly toilet trained. It can be frustrating, but it's worth it in the end.