

HOUSE TRAINING

One thing most people are worried about is house training! It's nothing to panic about and is actually usually easier in adult dogs than pups. Adults are more focused, better at controlling their bladder, and learn very quickly. Many dogs are already house trained; some may fit in perfectly from word go, others may need a 'refresher course'.

Some dogs pick it up in no time, some take longer. Be prepared to set aside time and to spend plenty of time in the yard. Yes, it can be a mission at first, but if done correctly, most dogs are house trained within 2 weeks – for life. Totally worth it!

The success of house training lies in you being alert, you being consistent, and you being patient and persistence. In other words, it lies with YOU!

Very important: DO NOT SHOUT AT OR PUNISH THEM if they don't go where you want them to – remember, this is all new for them; they don't know they may not go in a specific spot and where they should go instead.

When your dog does right PRAISE THEM (not overly loudly or too excitedly, just tell them they are a good dog, pet them, and you can even give them a small treat.

Remember: although it sounds like a lot of work, it should only last a very short while – **rather establish good habits now than try to fix bad ones later.**

House training DOs

Be alert! Dogs usually have a different expression or way of walking when they need to go; if you see them acting a little 'strained', it might be time to take them outside.

Warning signs: sniffing the floor, circling, 'walking with long legs', disappearing around the corner suddenly or heading for a room they've previously 'gone' in, a worried or strained expression, suddenly being restless, repeatedly going to the door to go outside.

Some dogs 'sneak away' and do their business out of sight of their owner, so be alert! (This is usually due to having been house trained in a harsh way.) If your new dog suddenly goes off where you can't see him, follow and then take them outside.

If they go outside where you want them to, praise them and make sure they know they did the right thing!

If they don't go when/where you want them to, stay calm and try again next time.

Always feed your dog at the same time of day (i.e. not leaving food out all day and night). This will make it much easier to houstrain them.

If your dog eats indoors, let them out straight after eating.

NOTE: After your dog has eaten, just woken up, or has been playing or excited are 'danger times' when your dog may start looking around to have a wee or do their business.

Bathroom breaks: Ideally, give your dog at least 6 – 8 'bathroom breaks' daily (more initially) – first thing in the morning, last thing at night, after each meal, and in between, even if they don't seem to want to go.

Do not wait for them to 'tell' you they need to go!

You may need to go with them into the garden and wait – some dogs will refuse to go on their own because they fear being locked out. Give them at least 5 – 10 minutes.

If they want to go back inside immediately, just be patient – don't play or talk to them a lot; just relax and consider it time to get fresh air!

Walk up and down slowly so that they also walk and sniff around.

If, after 5 minutes, nothing has happened, go back inside. Watch them closely – this is the time when some dogs will go! If you see any sign that they're thinking of it, take them out again. Otherwise, wait 20 minutes and try again.

If they have made a mess in the house, clean the area thoroughly with white vinegar. This breaks down the odour (and, even if you can't smell it after using soap or floor cleaner, your dog can).

Dogs tend to do their business where they've gone before – they follow their noses. So, removing all trace of scent where you don't want them to go will help to prevent them from repeatedly going in the same spot. If you have loose rugs, it's best to pick them up initially as it's not as easy to clean rugs as it is tiles, wood, or laminate.

Clean up their mess (urine and faeces) using newspaper; place this newspaper where you do want them to go (hold it down with a brick or rock so it doesn't blow away).

When you take your dog outside, **show them the area where you placed the soiled newspaper** (don't rub their nose in it!), and allow them to sniff it and walk about. The idea is that they will follow their noses to where they last 'went'. Sniffing and walking can also stimulate them into going to the loo.

IF you catch them 'in the act', you can clap your hands and say 'no' – don't do this AFTER they've done it as they won't make the connection. If you've managed to stop them, take them outside, wait for them to finish and praise and reward them.

Night time

Most adult dogs sleep through the night, but some, especially when new, will need to pee or do their business at night. At night, stay calm and quiet – don't excite them or you will create the idea that night time is a great time to get you up and playing in the garden.

Option 1: Put their bed near your bedroom or inside your room so you can hear if your dog wakes up and needs to go (whining, restless, etc.). Get up, calmly take them outside, and do as you would during the day. When done, settle them quietly into bed.

Option 2: If you can't have them nearby and have had some messing in the house overnight, you may need to set an alarm – experiment with the time (based on how often your dog goes during the day) to take them out.

Don't worry, although it sounds like you have loads of sleepless nights ahead, it should only last a very short while – **rather establish good habits now than try to fix bad ones later.**

House training DON'Ts

- X **NEVER – NEVER NEVER! – shout, punish, scare, or be harsh** with your dog while house training (and this includes the very cruel practice of rubbing their noses in it).

All that will happen is your dog will learn one main thing: that going in front of their owners is bad. They will start hiding from you and going in hidden spots, and not giving you warning when they need to go out – thus making your task even harder.

- X **Don't just put your dog into the yard**, shut the door, and leave them out – chances are, your dog will be so focused on getting back inside that he will totally forget about doing his business!
 - X **Don't wait** for your dog to let you know it needs to go out – you want to prevent accidents from happening.
 - X **Don't panic.** If you persevere and stay calm, consistent, and patient, it will work!
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If, despite being consistent and doing everything right, your dog is still peeing everywhere, there may be something else going on such as a bladder infection.

However, 99% of the time, it is just down to housetraining methods and being consistent.