

## POTTY TRAINING

Potty training is one of the most important things (if not THE most important thing) a house dog will learn, and you want to begin a good routine as soon as your new puppy comes home.

### **#1: Put your puppy on a structured eating routine.**

Young puppies will need to go potty within 10-30 minutes of waking up, eating, playing, or other general activity. You can make your job a bit easier by timing when your puppy last ate, when his nap times are, and keeping an eye on the clock while you're playing!

- Measure out your puppy's food for the day and divide it into two or three equal portions, depending on your puppy's age (3x for puppies under 4 months, 2x for puppies over 4 months).
  - The first meal should be given within an hour of waking up in the morning and the last should be scheduled at least two hours before bed.
- When you give your puppy his food make sure he finishes it in one sitting. If there is food left over when he's done, pick it up and save it for the next meal time.
  - Don't leave food in the bowl for your puppy to eat whenever he's hungry. This will make potty training so much harder because now you're unable to time when he last ate.

### **#2: Time (and supervised) your puppy's potty breaks.**

Puppies will need to go every 1-2 hours when awake. Time your potty breaks to encourage your puppy to go promptly and on command. For this exercise you'll need a leash, treats your puppy enjoys, a timer, and a bit of patience.

- **Step 1:** With your dog on a 4-5' leash, bring him where you'd like him to relieve himself and give your potty cue. I like to say "go potty". After you've given your command, hold still and ignore your puppy while he finds a good spot. This will encourage him to go faster, and allow him to focus on his task at hand.
- **Step 2:** Set your timer for 5 minutes or begin counting up to 360. We want to time our outings so our puppy learns not to dawdle.
- **Step 3:** Go or didn't go?

- **A:** If your puppy went potty, celebrate! Play with him for a few seconds, give a treat or two, or take a run with him around the yard. Let him know how good he did! After your little party go back inside. You did it!
- **B:** If your puppy didn't go in the 5 minutes, bring him back inside and supervise him for 10-15 minutes. You can either keep him on a leash with you or put him in his crate until you're ready to go out again. Don't leave him alone or allow him to leave your sight as he may find a place to go pee when you're not looking. When the 10-15 minutes are up, bring your puppy back outside and repeat steps 1-3 until your puppy goes potty successfully

The more you practice, the faster your puppy will go, and will start to pair the words "go potty" with him needing to relieve himself.

### **#3: Freedom is a Privilege (supervise, supervise, supervise)**

Quite often, the reason puppies have accidents inside is because we are giving him too much freedom. If a puppy is allowed to go everywhere, he will "go" everywhere.

Until your puppy is potty trained, make your job easier by keeping your puppy on a leash and in the same room with you. This will make it easier for you to keep an eye on him, bring him to the door, or catch him in case of an accident. The leash can either be left dragging on the ground or tied to your pants (also called "umbilical training")

If you aren't able to supervise your puppy when you're home, make sure he's either in his crate or playpen.