



House Training

Establishing a routine:

Both human and canines are creatures of habit, we are both highly routine oriented. This means you must try to stick to the same schedule in order for your dog to understand that if they hold their urine they will be able to go out soon. The problem when you do not establish a routine is that they cannot predict when they will be able to go outside and will simply release themselves whenever they have to go!

Scheduled feedings are also VERY important when housetraining. If you're leaving food down all day, your dog will need to go all day! By feeding scheduled meals you will know exactly when your dog needs to go out (usually immediately after meals depending on your dogs age).

Confinement:

Any dog that is not completely housebroken should not have freedom of the house! Use baby gates to block off rooms, limit your dog to one or two rooms in the house. Freedom is earned, if your dog is one who goes off in another room to potty, let's not give him/her the option to do so OR attach the leash to YOU. This way she/he cannot sneak off and go in a different room!

The Crate:

The reason the crate works is because dogs have a rule. This rule is that they will not mess where they eat and sleep. So if the crate is the correct size (just large enough for them to turn around, no marathon running!) they will not mess in their crate. Also, dogs are den animals, meaning they like confinement, it is a safe spot! The crate may look big and scary to us, but to a dog it is a safe den. Anytime you know you cannot watch your dog, put them in their crate. When you let them out make sure you IMMEDIATELY take them outside to go potty.

If you catch them in the act:

Remember - punishment does NOT work! Dogs live in the moment, meaning a minute after they pee they already forgot! So taking them over to a mess that you find an hour later and "scolding" them or saying no just doesn't make sense. They don't understand English and basically all you're teaching them is that YOU are bad, not that the behavior is bad. This is when you will get a dog that will simply not pee in front of you. Let's try to remember that it is a natural bodily function and to yell at them for doing it is like you being yelled at for breathing! All we need to do is TEACH them that in the human world, it is only acceptable to pee outside. When you catch them in the act the best thing to do is simply distract them. A simple "hey" or clap of the hands is enough. Quickly grab the end of their leash (leashes should be left on the dog all the time in the house during this training period!), and take them outside to their spot. When they do pee/poop outside throw a party!!!!

It's better to PREVENT mistakes then to wait for them to occur!

Leaving the leash on:

Leave your dog's leash on inside and let him/her drag it around (in the already confined rooms!). This way you can quickly pick it up if you need to stop them from getting into

something, jumping on counters, and having accidents. Remember that touch is reward, so anytime you touch your dog you are reinforcing the behavior they are currently doing. Plus it's much easier to step on a leash than it is to catch a dog, and you won't need to fumble around trying to find the leash if you catch them in the act!

Going outside:

Pick a spot! It is a natural behavior for a dog to choose a spot in the yard where he/she prefers to pee/poop. If your dog has not chosen one already, pick one! Every time you go outside go straight to this spot. If your dog is not 100% housetrained, outside needs to mean pee/poop time ONLY! Meaning NO play! The problem is that dogs view outside as a really fun place to be, there are tons of smells, and birds, squirrels and things to look at. They go outside, have a great time and forget to pee/poop. Then we bring them inside, let them off the leash, they become bored, and suddenly remember they have to pee/poop. This is when accidents occur!

The 10/3 Rule:

Example: Let's say it's 6 am and you are just taking your dog out:

Go to your potty spot and stand still or limit your walking to small circles. Wait 10 minutes. Do not go for a walk, pat, play, feed or pay attention to your pup. Be a "tree"!

If your dog does not go then, go back inside and place in the crate or stand at the door with the leash on. Giving no attention AT ALL, be boring! Wait 3 minutes. Then back outside to the potty spot.

Allow 10 minutes to do their business. If they do not go then it's back inside for 3 minutes. After 3 minutes of no attention at all, back outside for 10 minutes.

Once your dog DOES go; throw a party! Give a treat, throw a ball, and Give attention and love! By going in and out you are setting your dog up to succeed. We simply need them to associate outside with potty only!

Rewards:

Remember that there are other types of rewards other than food! Find what your dog absolutely craves and use it as a reward. Some common rewards are: food, freedom, play, attention, and touch praise. So use these to get what you want by WITHOLDING them until you get what you want. Remember that nothing in life is free! Anytime your dog pees/poops outside you should be throwing a party!

CLEAN UP!

Clean up all accidents with a commercial odor neutralizer. We highly recommend *Natures Miracle. This type of product, readily available in pet supply stores, breaks down (using enzymes or bacteria) the organic matter that causes the odor. Cleaning up with ammonia or pine based cleansers will not neutralize the odor. If there is any residual odor left after cleaning, chances are good that the dog will return to the spot. (Like we discussed, it is a natural behavior for dogs to choose a spot and stick to it!)