



# Bucks County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

AN INDEPENDENT NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
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## Supplemental Housetraining/Crate Handout

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### Sizing a Crate:

A crate should fit the dog nose to tail and be at least 2 inches above the dog's head. Your dog should be able to turn around and lay down. A crate uses the premise that dogs do not like to soil their sleeping area. Ex. (At 3-4 weeks, puppies learn to exit their sleeping area to urinate and defecate.) A larger crate will make your job harder because it will give the dog space to sleep in one corner and go to the bathroom in the other corner.

Consider your dog's age when calculating how long they can physically hold it before they have to go potty. Puppies have to go potty after they eat, sleep or play while an adult dog over a year can physically hold it for at least four to six hours. For puppies, take their age in months and subtract one which equals how long they can physically hold it. Ex A two month old puppy can hold it for one hour while a four month old puppy can hold it for three hours. There are certain dog breeds that may take longer to housetrain than others. Dogs in the hound family like the Beagle, Fox Hound, Bassett Hound and other breeds like, the Pug, Bichon Frise, Dachshund, and Maltese, may take up to two years to housetrain.

### ⊙Crate Zones

Zone 1: The Crate.

Zone 2: A dog-proofed area around the crate with an easy to clean floor.

Zone 3: The rest of the house.

### Here is how it works:

Picture three circles like a bulls eye. Zone 1 is the smallest circle in the center, the crate. Zone 2 is the circle enclosing the bulls eye. It is a little larger and encompasses Zone 1. Baby gate off an area with an easy to clean floor to create Zone 2. Zone 3 is the largest circle and the most challenging for dog's to master. Patience and consistent training will pay off for both you and your best friend.

### ⊙Start Here at Zone 1

This is the starting point for housetraining all dogs. Right now, Zone 1 is the center of your dog's world, just like the bulls eye is the center of a target. Your dog should be in Zone 1 during feeding times, at night to sleep, during the day when no one is home and during the day whenever someone cannot physically watch your dog, even if it is for 5 minutes. Your dog will be allowed out of Zone 1 when on a leash, after going outside to go to the bathroom.

Eventually you will have to bring your dog inside. If your dog didn't go potty in the 20 minutes you were outside, go to Zone 1.

If your dog did both things outside, go to Zone 2.

### ⊙Welcome to Zone 2.

Congratulations. This is the reward and the place where your dog can be after he/she has done both potty things outside. It is a larger area than the crate and the best place to give your dog supervised freedom. This is also the place where your dog can show you, one step at a time, that they are learning this housetraining thing. For the next 2-4 weeks this will be your dog's world.

Accidents will Happen: To minimize the risks of taking steps backwards, let's make it easy for your dog to succeed.

- 1.) Leave the leash on him/her when in Zone 2. It is much easier to run outside with a dog if they are already wearing a leash.
- 2.) Start simple and take baby steps. After your dog has gone potty outside, start with 5-7 minutes of supervised freedom. Slowly work your dog from 5 to 10, then 15, 20 up to half a hour of run of Zone 2. Don't skip right to 8 hours of freedom.
- 3.) Give your dog food and water at the same time everyday. Keep in mind that it takes most dogs 20 minutes to an hour to process a meal. If you can predict what's going in, you can predict when something will come out.
- 4.) Chart the mistakes. Start of houstraining log and write down the time your dog urinates and defecates and where, inside or outside. Try to make sure you are offering your dog potty breaks when they have to go.

Dog's love to spend time with their pack members but may not always understand your rules for living. If your dog is having accidents in Zone 2, you trying to progress to quickly. Stay on Zone 2 until your dog is demonstrating to you that they are ready to move on. If your dog is picking up the new houstraining routine and hasn't had an accident in Zone 2 for at least 2 weeks, go to Zone 3.

### ☉Zone 3 rewards houstrained dogs

Good job! You have made it to Zone 3. It took lots of hard work to get here. This is a payoff for pooches in training. It is a larger area than Zone 2 and the place where the rest of the pack hangs out. All dogs must be heavily supervised in Zone 3. Close extra doors and consider putting up a baby gate to restrict your dog's access to other areas of your house until your dog is consistently houstrained for at least 1 year. That's right a whole year!

?Why: Houstraining is the process of teaching an animal to eliminate on or in an appropriate substrate. When dog's have consistent accidents on carpet, it is a self rewarding behavior. Emptying the bladder feels good. You cannot control how a dog feels when they empty their bladder, but you can control where they are. It is through this consistent emptying of the bladder outside associated with the good feeling that teaches a dog to hold it until they get outside. It takes many good feelings outside to teach a dog to reliably wait for a outside walk to go to the bathroom.

### Special Note about Potty Breaks

When taking your dog outside to go to the bathroom, follow these very simple steps.

- 1.) Take your dog to the same spot every time. Pick a place close to the exit door.
- 2.) Clean up after your dog. Your pup may not want to go in an area that is already full.
- 3.) Always keep your dog on a leash. Not only is it important for you to be there to see that your dog has eliminated, but you also must be there to praise.
- 4.) Save off the lead experiences as a reward for after your dog has done both things outside.
- 5.) Take a watch. Give your dog at least 20 minutes to smell around and go potty outside.
- 6.) Do not end the walk with a potty break=Don't bring your dog back inside after they go potty. Instead, reward them with something fun like a walk around the block, brushing, playtime, exploring etc.

?Why: Ending you time outside after your dog eliminates, can teach them to hold out and delay when they go to the bathroom to extend the walk. Then you bring them back outside when they don't go to the bathroom and voila, now you pal is peeing inside the house rather than outside.

What to do if your dog doesn't go potty right away: If your dog doesn't go right away, at the end of 20 minutes, bring them back inside and pop them back into the crate to 1-2 minutes. Take them back outside for 20. Continue that pattern until your dog is completely empties outside. Then reward with verbal praise, a treat and something fun outside for your pal.