



Out N' About Dog Training

www.outnaboutdogtraining.com

619-417-2368

Housebreaking Your New Puppy

Start at the ideal age. The best time to begin housebreaking a puppy is when it is 7 ½ to 8 ½ weeks old. At this age, you can teach your puppy where to eliminate before it has established its own preferences. But don't worry, if your puppy is older when you start housebreaking; it will still learn, though it may take a bit longer.

Six to eight times a day, take your puppy outdoors to eliminate. Choose an appropriate spot to take the puppy immediately after it wakes up, after a play session, and 15 to 30 minutes after meals. If you take your puppy to the same spot every day, previous odors will stimulate it to urinate or defecate. Many puppies need 15 to 20 minutes of moving around and sniffing before they eliminate. Stay with the puppy the whole time. Housebreaking problems can result if you are unsure whether the puppy actually eliminated and you let it return to the house too soon. Also, the puppy needs to focus at the task at hand, so try to take the puppy to a quiet area and not to distract the puppy or play with it until it has eliminated.

Use a key phrase while your puppy eliminates. If you repeat the same phrase (e.g. "go potty" or "do your business") every time your puppy eliminates outdoors, it will learn that this phrase means that it is the right time and place to eliminate.

Once the puppy eliminates outdoors, immediately reward it. Reward the puppy by praising it, giving it a treat, or playing with it. Remember to reward it right away. The puppy will not learn to eliminate outdoors if the reward comes when it returns to the house. Instead, the puppy will think it is being reward for coming inside.

Supervise the puppy indoors as well as outdoors. Find a room in your house that allows you to watch your puppy as much as possible. This will help you catch the puppy if it starts to eliminate indoors. It is best to contain the puppy to an area that is not carpeted. This will help with ease of clean up, in case of an accident. You can also leash the puppy or place a bell on its collar to help you keep track of it.

When you leave home, put the puppy in a crate.

When you can't supervise your puppy, leave it in a small puppy-proof area such as a crate. If the crate is large enough to accommodate the puppy as an adult, partition it to avoid having the puppy soil one end and sleep in the other. And remember that young puppies' bladder and bowel capacities are limited, so let the puppy out at least every four hours.

Don't punish after the fact. If your puppy has an accident in the house, don't go get the puppy and rub its nose in it. This doesn't do any good because the misbehavior has already occurred. The puppy will know that you are upset, but will not know exactly why. Instead, try to catch the puppy in the act. If you see the puppy getting ready to house soil, make a loud noise to startle it, or yell "outside!" Hopefully, the puppy will stop what it is doing and you can take it outdoors to eliminate. DON'T ever swat your puppy for accidents; dogs do not understand physical punishment. It can make them want to hide when they eliminate, or it can also make them fearful of your hand.

Don't leave food out all day. Feed your puppy at set times every day, and remove the food bowl after 15-20 minutes. This will create regular intervals at which the puppy will need to eliminate.

Thoroughly clean areas where the puppy has eliminated in the house. Find a safe, effective product that removes both odors and stains. It is important to clean a soiled area completely, otherwise your puppy may return to it and eliminate again.

Stick with the training program. Most puppies can be successfully housebroken by 14 to 20 weeks of age if the process has begun early. But a pet may take longer to housebreak for several reasons. If you are having difficulties, feel free to contact me for further assistance.