

GOOD HUMAN



Survival Guide for people housetraining puppies

A companion guide to Good Human's puppy program

HOUSE TRAINING IN THREE SIMPLE STEPS

1

CONFINEMENT

Every puppy should learn that confinement is a part of their daily routine. Respecting boundaries, taking responsibility, and waiting for permission are important outcomes of Crate Training which supports successful housebreaking.

2

ROUTINE

Immediately following each period of confinement, your puppy must be taken outside on a leash to their potty spot. "Routine" means walking your puppy on a loose leash so that your puppy can relieve themselves in a specific location under your supervision.

3

SUPERVISED PLAY

After your puppy has eliminated outdoors during a supervised on-leash potty walk, they may have a supervised play period. Supervision means giving your puppy complete and undivided attention. Observe behavior changes that predict their need to go out to potty. Play interactive games or let your puppy play independently with toys.

1

CONFINEMENT

Responsible parents don't allow a toddler to roam the house unsupervised. Think of your puppy as a toddler. You're responsible for confining your puppy or adult puppy within safe boundaries when you are unable to directly supervise them.

It is very important to introduce the crate gradually. They should LOVE their crate! If you plop them in there and shut the door, your puppy might become fearful of their crate, refuse to go in, nip you, or whine, bark, and howl while inside. If you train your puppy to love their crate, they will happily go in and take a nap. Much better!

BENEFITS OF CRATE TRAINING

- Easier management (see Puppy Survival Guide: Management and Planning)
- Easier housetraining (see Housetraining DOs and DON'Ts).
- Provides a safe space for your puppy.
- Easier travel and transporting.
- Crate training takes advantage of your puppy's natural instincts to seek a comfortable, quiet, and safe place when their environment becomes too loud or overwhelming.
- It's an important tool to ensure pups get the rest they need daily.
- **Crate training makes housetraining easier. Puppies don't want to soil their area.**

CRATE TRAINING INSTRUCTIONS

- Let your puppy sniff around the crate and toss some treats in for them to enjoy while inside.
- Practice 5-minute training sessions in which your puppy gets lots of treats when in their crate and none when they leave.
- Slowly increase the number of seconds you wait before you return to your original position. Remember to mark and treat each successful try.
- Begin shutting the door for one second, then opening it. If your puppy stays in the crate after you open the door, give them more treats! If not, wait until your puppy chooses to go back in, give more treats, and repeat the process.
- As long as your pup is enjoying the process, gradually increase the time the door is shut, letting your puppy freely enter and exit the crate, but maintaining the rule that while they are in the crate, they get treats, and while they are out of the crate, no treats.
- Supercharge your progress by giving your pup stuffed kongs in their crate. Shut the door while your pup is enjoying their kong, and open it before they are finished. If your puppy chooses to stay inside after finishing, more treats! Now you can gradually increase the time your puppy is in the crate or the distance you go away from them, but not both at once. You're well on your way!

TIPS FOR CRATE TRAINING

- Do not rush this process! Slow is fast when it comes to crate training!
- Toss some treats just for going near the crate.
- Give your puppy treats in and out of the crate and work up to the steps above.
- Never use the crate as a punishment. Your puppy will fear it and refuse to enter.
- Make it a super-swanky, comfortable den for your puppy.
- Put your puppy briefly with some enrichment they enjoy while you are home. Remove your puppy before they finish with their enrichment item.
- Start slowly and keep sessions short if your puppy is uncomfortable with confinement.
- Leave some yummy treats in the crate for them to investigate on their own - walk away and don't watch them while they find them.
- Never force them into the crate for any reason. Instead, start with a playpen to contain them while you are away, at night, etc., and gradually work on overcoming their fear. It's ok if it takes a while!
- Experiment with different types of crates and bedding. Some pups like hard-sided dark crates, and others like open wire crates. Some pups like it very padded, and others are more likely to go in if nothing is on the bottom.
- Be patient and let them go at their own speed. For some pups, the moment we take the pressure off, they decide it is no big deal!
- Extra special treats or meals can be given in the crate to create positive associations.
- Don't teach your pup bad habits by letting them rush out of the crate when you open the door. Using these steps, your puppy should happily wait in the crate to get more treats when you open the door (you can start using "ok" as a release word when your pup understands to wait in the crate). If your puppy is rushing out when you open the door, decrease time in the crate to the point that they are relaxed and calm.

TROUBLESHOOTING CRATE TRAINING

- By gradually working up the time your pup is in their crate and creating positive associations with it, you should avoid whining and barking from the crate. If your pup is whining or barking, do not let them out immediately. Instead, wait for a break in the whining (you can distract them with a silly noise to get this break), then let them out. You don't want to teach your puppy that whining means they get out of the crate! If you notice whining or barking in the crate, decrease the time in the crate to the point that they are relaxed and calm, then start slowly working back up.

ALTERNATE TO CRATE TRAINING

If your puppy is vocalizing excessively, attempting escape, soiling, or otherwise unable to settle in their crate, consider a comfortable, quiet, and safe place such as:

- Baby-gated in a kitchen or bathroom area
- A larger X-pen or larger enclosure such as this one.

2 ROUTINE

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Create a daily schedule that follows the 3 Steps IN ORDER.

Don't progress to the next step until your puppy has been successful with the current step. In other words, there is no supervised playtime until after potty time. If your puppy doesn't potty within a reasonable time outside, your puppy must GO BACK to Step 1, Confinement in their crate, for 5 - 10 minutes. Then try again outside. No potty, no play. The lengths of time for confinement and play will vary throughout the day, and you should adapt those times to your daily routine.

NO POTTY, NO PLAY

SCHEDULE AND RECORDS

The 3 Steps of your housebreaking plan work together smoothly when you organize them into a daily schedule. A good schedule is the framework for your day and accounts for all the puppy's activities throughout each 24-hour cycle. Move through the steps from confinement to potty routine to supervised play and continue to cycle through these three activities.

The time you spend on each activity depends on the time of day and your typical daily routine. Be consistent about following the schedule, but at the same time, be prepared to make adjustments when you see opportunities to improve.

Your schedule will be your most valuable training tool!





SAMPLE SCHEDULE

for a 2-6 month old puppy- adjust as needed

6:30 AM	Wake up, take puppy out for a potty break
6:45 AM	10 minute training session with breakfast kibble
7:00 AM	Put puppy in a safe space with toys while you get ready.
7:30 AM	20 minute walk and/or playtime outside with puppy
8:00 AM	Puppy goes in playpen with a stuffed kong when you leave.
11:00 AM	Your sitter takes puppy for a 15 or minute walk + play!
11:25 AM	Puppy goes back in playpen with lunch stuffed into a kong.
2:00 PM	Your sitter is back for another walk and playtime!
2:25 PM	Puppy goes in playpen with a safe toy until you get home.
5:15 PM	Let puppy out immediately to potty when you get home.
5:45 PM	Puppy goes in playpen with half dinner stuffed into a kong.
6:15 PM	Use the other half of dinner to practice crate training.
6:45 PM	Potty break!
7:00 PM	Puppy can go in playpen for a rest while you eat dinner.
7:30 PM	Playtime! Spend time playing tug, fetch, or a training game.
8:00 PM	PM walk and explore.
8:30 PM	Winding down: reward calm behavior, puppy snuggles
9:45 PM	Last potty break, and bedtime!
Late Night	If you tend to stay up late, you can take pup for one more potty before you go to bed. If not, you may need to wake up in the middle of the night for a potty break until your pup gets to 5 months old. At that point, they should be able to sleep for 6-7 hours at night without an extra potty.

3

SUPERVISED PLAY

After your puppy finishes outside, they have earned their indoor supervised playtime. This is also a good time to feed your puppy, but let them finish eating before starting playtime. Your puppy will need to go outside again after eating and lots of active playing. Learn to recognize changes in your puppy's body language that predict their need to go out. Notice when your puppy takes a drink and take your puppy out 15 - 30 minutes later. Supervise your puppy closely when not confined, and adjust their schedule according to their needs.

EXERCISE BENEFITS HOUSETRAINING

- Regulates the digestive system and creates predictable elimination patterns
- Reduces anxiety that can lead to submissive urination
- Decreases destructive behaviors from pent-up energy
- Creates more opportunities for potty breaks and rewards

EXERCISE AND ENRICHMENT!

Appropriate exercise and mental enrichment are great ways to reduce your puppy's boredom and can help with various behavioral issues. Your puppy can play more active games outside or walk longer with you. Providing enriching experiences will help your puppy stay psychologically and physiologically healthy.

- Incorporate basic training with positive reinforcement
- Use puzzle toys that engage your dog's mind
- Play interactive games like fetch, tug (with rules), and hide-and-seek
- Consider scent games that tap into your dog's natural abilities
- Good back-jaw chewing on an appropriate item.
- [Enrichment video playlist to get you started.](#)
- *Enrichment Now!* e-book to follow with enrichment ideas!

TIPS FOR SUPERVISED PLAYTIME

- Use baby gates or exercise pens when full supervision isn't possible
- Tether your dog to you with a leash during indoor free time
- Gradually increase freedom as reliability improves
- Watch for circling, sniffing, or other pre-elimination behaviors

After playtime, provide an opportunity to potty. Then, restart the cycle.



Sniffing the floor is a pretty good sign that a puppy needs to go out.



PUPPY ENRICHMENT

STUFFED KONG

This will be helpful for you to help survive puppyhood. Use your puppy's meals + peanut butter, cheese, or cream cheese to fill a Kong toy and keep them occupied. Experiment to find their favorite combination of foods. Buy 5 kongs and rotate them (they are dishwasher safe!) so you aren't constantly searching for your kong somewhere. We like to keep one in the freezer for whenever we need to keep puppy busy.

CRINKLE SOCK

Take an empty plastic water bottle and remove the cap, ring, and label. Slide it in an old tube sock and tie a knot on the chew end. Don't leave this with puppies unattended in case they get through the sock and start shredding the plastic water bottle. Some puppies will love the crinkly noise and texture, while others might be afraid of it. Don't force your pup if they're afraid!

TUG, THREE WAYS

- Take an old T-shirt, cut into strips, and braid with a knot on either end.
- Take three strips of fleece and braid them together.
- Cut a hole through 2 sides of a small tennis ball and slide it over the braided fleece. Tie a knot at both ends. This is perfect for tug!

CHEW TOYS

It's a good idea to have a mixture of rubber-type chew toys and food-based chews. Be careful with your food chews - don't leave anything that can splinter easily with puppy while you are gone (choking hazard) and check ingredients for safety! Did you know rawhides are often bleached with dangerous chemicals?

SNUFFLE MAT

A snuffle mat will stimulate your pup's natural foraging instincts by mimicking the hunt for food in grass and fields.

You can make a "snuffle mat" for your puppy by tying fleece strips around a rubber mat with holes. Search "DIY Snuffle Mat" on YouTube for details & instructions.

HOUSETRAINING TIPS

- Housetraining is all about creating good habits. **Consistency is key!**
- Stay on schedule for feeding so you can gauge output. Keep in mind that puppies are generally more metabolically active in the evening.
- Make an effort to be consistent with your schedule 7 days a week, even though weekends may be on a different schedule for you.
- Manage areas by closing doors and using baby gates. Puppies like to go in isolated areas.
- Acknowledge successful potties! But wait until your puppy has voided completely!
- Clean any accidents with biological enzymes to truly get rid of urine smells,
- The use of potty pads can make transitioning outside difficult.
- Scolding your puppy leads to them finding a secret pee spot to avoid punishment.
- Withholding water can cause your puppy to drink excessively when they have access and sets them up for an accident due to a sudden urge. It can also cause medical issues!
- If your puppy is scheduled to go out but nothing happens after a few minutes, take them back in and try again in 5 minutes. Do not hang around outside or play. This will help them know that "Go potty" means business! (exceptions are pottying at the puppy park)
- Potty bells can be helpful. [Here is a great video!](#)

TROUBLESHOOTING HOUSETRAINING MISTAKES

If your puppy has an accident during the training process, consider what you can do differently to prevent future mistakes. Maybe you...

- missed the puppy's predictive behavior
- didn't respond soon enough to your puppy's behavior change
- didn't follow the schedule
- need to troubleshoot the schedule and make a revision



YOUR STRESS

It's important to make sure you are keeping yourself emotionally healthy, of course. But it's also important to consider that your stress affects your puppy. Housetraining is hard work for all family members. [Here's an interesting study.](#) Take deep breaths, wiggle your shoulders, and get the tension out. Puppies yawn and shake off, nose to tail, to relieve tension. It works for humans, too!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Housetraining video playlist](#)
- [Hard to Housetrain](#). I don't have this book but I've heard it was great for troubleshooting.

Our training sessions are a series of negotiations between everyone, including your puppy. Please let me know if something isn't quite working out. Please communicate any concerns or unaddressed needs and we will find a solution that fits your family.

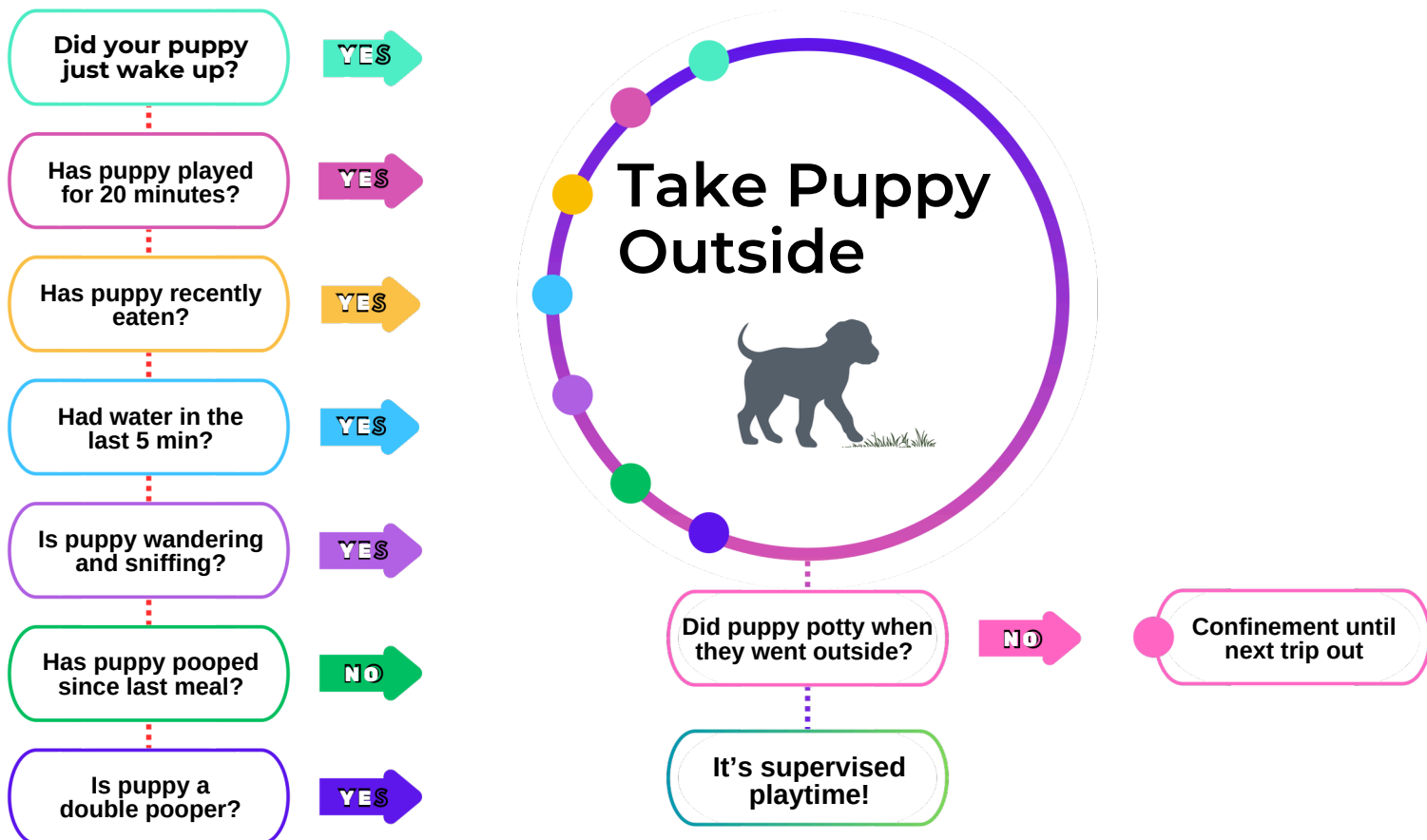
HOUSETRAINING

flow chart

Take your puppy out to a consistent location

- when they wake up in the morning
- a few minutes after drinking
- 15-min after eating
- when they wake up from a nap
- before, during, and after training or play sessions
- when you come into the room
- before you leave the house
- during TV commercials
- when your puppy wanders off
- before bedtime
- in the middle of the night

Once you see the pattern, you can skip some of these, I promise.



During supervised playtime, your puppy can play freely indoors with minimal chance of an accident. This time will vary by puppy and change with age. Start with 10-15 min and slowly increase from there.

HOUSETRAINING DOs AND DON'Ts

MISSION To teach your puppy it is more rewarding to go outside the house than inside and to "hold it" until they can go outside.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Your puppy can only hold their bladder for a certain amount of time. This time increases as they grow older. The general rule is that they can hold it for the number of months old they are + one in hours. For example, if your pup is 4 months old, they can probably hold their bladder for about 5 hours.

SET UP FOR SUCCESS

- Make sure your puppy is not left without a potty break for more than the amount of time they can hold their bladder.
- Don't leave them unsupervised for long periods of time.
- Plan ahead with a routine schedule that accounts for frequent potty breaks.

MORE HELP Check out [CRATE TRAINING](#) and [PUPPY SURVIVAL GUIDE MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING](#) for more helpful info!

DON'T

Punish your puppy for having an "accident" inside.

DO

If you punish your puppy, they won't know why you are yelling! Also, the old idea that you need to "rub their face in it" does NOT work.

Punishment leads to fear, and if your puppy fears you finding "accidents" they probably won't stop going in the house, but they probably WILL start hiding accidents from you - we promise this is much worse!

Once they have already had an accident inside, it is too late to do anything about - this time. Ask yourself what you could do differently next time - (take them out sooner? restrict to a smaller area?) and adjust your plan. Accidents will happen while you are training your puppy, but your focus should be on **PREVENTING** them and **REWARDING** your puppy for going outside.

DON'T

Miss the opportunity to reward when your puppy does their business outside.

DO

Walk your puppy on a leash and take treats with you. Reward immediately after they go with something yummy and some verbal praise. Be careful not to distract your pup by rewarding, speaking, or crinkling a poo bag before they are finished! Make sure to stay outside after they go so they don't learn that the fun walk is over immediately after they potty.

DON'T

Expect your puppy to give you a signal when it is time to go!

DO

While some puppies do go to the door or whine when they are ready to do their business, a lot of puppies don't! Your puppy may give you some signs such as pawing at the carpet, pacing or circling, sniffing at the ground, or acting restless, but overall it is important that you be proactive. Your puppy will need to go out at regular intervals, as well as after a long play session, after training, after waking up from a nap, and when let out of their crate or playpen.

DON'T

Worry too much if your pup has a tendency to go in their bed or crate.

DO

A lot of puppies, especially when they are very young, have a habit of urinating on soft things. We don't want to encourage this habit, so rather than leaving your pup in a crate with a bed, set up a playpen with a pee pad on one side and a folded towel for a bed on the other. Change the pee pad as soon it is soiled, and feed meals with the kibble spread directly on the towel. This setup encourages your puppy to go on the opposite side of the space from where they like to sleep and eat. Once they reliably use the pee pad and not the towel, you can try the crate again with the towel as bedding.

DON'T

Rely too much on pee pads unless you plan to use them forever!

DO

Pee pads are useful for teaching your puppy not to go in their bed or for very young puppies who need to go more frequently than they can be walked, but our mission is to teach your pup to go **OUTSIDE**. The sooner you can phase pee pads out of your routine, the better - if your puppy gets used to going there, they will be harder to house train in the long run!

DON'T

Neglect to thoroughly clean up "accidents"

DO

If you don't clean up accidents completely, your pup may be drawn back to the same place to go again in the future. It's important to use a cleaner that is specifically made for pet accidents - these usually contain enzymes that will eat up the mess, making cleaning easier and reducing the chance that your puppy will come back to this spot to go again in the future.

DON'T

Forget to make sure everyone in the house is on the same page.

DO

Make sure everyone in the home knows your house training plan. Anyone who lives with you should be aware of your puppy's schedule, where they stay when no one is home, where they are allowed to play, what to do when your puppy has an accident, and what to do when they successfully go outside. If everyone is consistent with these rules and plans, your puppy will be house trained much quicker! Consistency is key to success!

