



## Crate and Housetraining Training Guidelines

Adult dogs can typically be housetrained as fast as a puppy, and many times it is easier! Coming into a new home with a new schedule requires a little patience and lots of consistency. While many adult dogs have had years of experience in housetraining, it is best to start from scratch. Following these basic guidelines as soon as you bring your new dog home will make your life and your new dog's life much easier. Adult shelter dogs need to adapt to the new potty and feeding schedule and are still learning that there are appropriate places to go to the bathroom. This may include teaching a dog who came from an urban environment to eliminate in grass, or teaching a dog who came from a country like setting to go to the bathroom on concrete while taking a walk in the city. The initial structure will ensure more freedom down the road.



**Carla relaxes in her crate**

### Why is crate training beneficial?

- A crate is a safe, comfortable place for your dog to relax.
- Dogs who are crate trained, save us money because it prevents destructive behaviors when unattended. There are different crate types, but the most common are airline type and wire. Crates can be found online, at pet stores, thrift stores, craigslist and garage sales
- Crate trained dogs make potty training much easier and successful
- Crate training prevents unneeded additional stress for a dog if kenneling is needed for any reason, such as an emergency vet visit or boarding while owners are out of town.

- Crating when we have guests in our homes allow for a less stressful visit for both dogs and humans.
  - Crates can be used to manage behaviors such as mouthy dogs, over excited dogs and more.
- Crating is a safe way to manage a multi-dog household.

**Here are a few tips to make crate time as enjoyable as possible for your dogs:**

- Exercise before crating .A tired dog is more apt to relax and sleep well. Running around a yard may not be enough for him. Toys such as: a Chase It Dog toy, Frisbee play, ball play, etc... are excellent ways to tire your dog out.
- The crate should be sized properly. Large enough to stand and turn around. This creates a secure but comfortable area.
- Mental exercise is just as important (if not more important) as physical exercise. It is the equivalent to us putting in a work day or taking a difficult test. Stuffed Kongs are perfect crate only meals, and can replace boring bowl fed meals. It takes time to work on a Kong, easing anxiety and mentally tiring the dog out. This is a very special treat. When given only at crate time, it creates a very positive association with the crate. Kongs can be stuffed then frozen to make the Kong more challenging. Kong stuffing ideas: peanut butter, cream cheese, baby food, wet dog food, tuna, and frozen low sodium chicken broth (in ice cube trays).
- Begin feeding all meals in the crate. This makes the crate the place where all good things come from.
- You know the saying: we want what we can't have? Build drive/desire to be in the crate by putting high value treats (such as deer antlers, bully sticks, etc.) inside and shutting the door, waiting for your dog to paw at the door to get in. You want your dog to be BEGGING to go into their crate! If you have a multi dog household, do this exercise with dogs kept separate to avoid any conflict.
- Make the crate as comfortable as possible: cover over top, crate pad, blanket etc.
- Leave on the radio or TV. It can help soothe anxiety especially classical music.
- Include items of clothing with your scent to comfort the pup.
- Do not only crate when leaving. You want your dog to have positive associations with the crate .The crate should be in a room of the house that is frequently used, such as the living room, not a lonely location like a basement.
- Randomly give signs that you are leaving- without actually leaving. Such as: jiggling keys, putting on shoes, etc.. Reward the dog when giving these cues.
- All natural remedies have been known to help to ease anxiety upon departure: Rescue Remedy, DAP collars, plug ins or sprays are options. Just like with shy dogs, many people have had good results with products such as ProQuiet or HarmonEase.
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**\*\*\*If your dog has moderate to severe separation anxiety, it is best to consult with a professional . Symptoms may include: causing harm to oneself, the inability to eat or drink, and more. Please contact our behavior department for recommendations\*\*\***

**House training Help:**

- When first acclimating dog to new schedule, try to let dog out every hour or so. After a week, you may begin waiting for longer amounts of time. If going well, begin normal schedule.
- Do not give too much freedom too soon. A dog who has full access to a new home, will probably have more accidents than a dog who is supervised and given access to house room by room. Leaving a dog unattended is a recipe for disaster!

- Reward when your dog goes to the bathroom outside!
- Be consistent. Keeping the same feeding and bathroom schedule makes for successful results.
- Most dogs will give hints that they need to go. Some are obvious such as barking and whining. Others are more subtle such as sniffing or circling.

**What happens if she has an accident?**

- If your dog has an accident in front of you, take him outside immediately. Praise him once he goes outside. Do not hit or punish your dog under any circumstances. If your dog has frequent accidents, modify the crating schedule and always eliminate health issues that could contribute.
- Be sure to thoroughly clean the area with an enzyme based cleaner. Dogs are attracted to the scent of a soiled area, so the odor must be completely eliminated.

**Example of schedule of an adult dog for owner who works an average day:**

7:30 AM-Take outside to a specific spot to go to the bathroom, Let the dog know they did a good thing by saying “Yes” and then reward with a treat. Some dogs may need to walk around a bit before going to the bathroom.

7:40 AM-Reward with off leash playtime

8:00 AM-One more bathroom break and then: time for crate and daytime meal. Frozen Kongs will provide mental stimulation, build a good association with the crate and help curb anxiety

12:00 PM-If midday potty break is possible: Take outside to go potty. Let the dog know they did a good thing by saying “Yes” and then reward with a treat.

12:15 PM- Midday Kong or hollow bone

5:30 PM-Take outside to go potty. Praise and reward.

5:45 PM-Playtime and/or walk

6:30 PM-Feed in crate. This will build positive association with crate.

6:45 PM-Bathroom break. Praise and reward

9:45 PM-Bathroom break. Praise and reward

10:00PM- Bedtime. Crate door open.

If you need more information on crate or housetraining training, please contact our behavior department: [behavior@jaxhumane.org](mailto:behavior@jaxhumane.org)

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