

Housebreaking your new dog or puppy



Whether you have decided to adopt an older dog from the local rescue shelter or a puppy from a breeder, it's a big decision that would probably change your life for a good few years ahead. The day is finally here: You are bringing the new addition to the family home with you. The whole family is excited and happy including your new companion!

You must understand that this move for your new dog or puppy is probably going to be a very stressful occurrence. It's a new environment, new people to meet, the food and water is different, he even doesn't even know where the doors are that lead outside. He doesn't know where he will sleep. Most probably he hasn't been housetrained previously. It would be sensible to assume that an older dog has not been housebroken and start all over again with him like a new puppy.

Once your new companion arrives home one of the most important things to do is to thoroughly introduce the dog to his yard or exercise area and let him "eliminate" before entering the house. He will naturally be inquisitive and will want to further explore the place. Try to be patient and wait for him to "eliminate" outdoors in the yard. Be certain to praise him lots and let him know this was the right thing for him to do. Alternatively you can have him on a leash and do the same thing in any area where you expect your new dog to defecate or urinate, most probably that would be the area outside your house in a near by open space.

New dogs or puppies most commonly develop diarrhea because of the stress of moving as well as the new water and food source can result in episodes of diarrhea. For the first few days it would be a good idea to give access to the outdoor elimination area for the first few days if it is a fenced area, otherwise never let your dog out of your home unattended. Don't expect your dog to communicate to you when he needs to go out. Take him outside and praise him every time he eliminates.

Your housetraining strategy for it to be effective must be based on the prevention of indoor elimination accidents rather than discipline after the circumstance. In the first few days if your dog eliminates inside the house because you didn't take him out when you should have then it's not his fault!

Older dogs will have better bowl and bladder control; puppies would generally have less control. You must have your dog or puppy on a regular elimination schedule and take him outside at frequently and at certain times, whether he needs to eliminate or not; first thing in the morning, after meals, after play, and the last thing at night. It is important to escort him to be 100% sure that he indeed eliminated. Dogs are creatures of habit and they love to fall into a routine. The quicker you turn a good behavior into a habit, the faster your training will go.

One of the most effective ways to housebreak your dog is to stop him from eliminating all around the house in the first place. A crate is usually a very good start. If you haven't already decided on a crate for your dog, you may want to investigate purchasing one for him. Dogs are instinctively den animals and have an instinct not to soil their den in this case the crate. The crate will effectively become your dog's den. Overnight confinement to the crate and for three to five hours during the day when he is alone and unsupervised will significantly help speed the housetraining process.



Your due diligence and best efforts will not completely eradicate the possibilities of an accident occurring. If it does happen, treat the incident as done and dusted. It is very important that you do not confuse or frighten your dog with physical reprimand or yelling. I can assure you the dog will NOT understand why you're so upset, and by doing this you are only creating more stress to the dog and consequently more possible diarrhea incidents. Place the dog in another room, outdoors, or in the crate while you clean.

If the accident occurred on carpeting use lots of paper towel and blemish with fresh paper until you have lifted as much liquid as possible. Neutralize the odor with white vinegar and water or a commercial pet-odor remover. A diarrhea stain on a carpet or sofa can be lifted with a solution of warm water, soap and white vinegar.

Housetraining your older dog requires endurance, understanding, compassion and lots of time. Your dog wants to ultimately please you by doing the right thing. With your help he will be able to make a successful and smooth adjustment and transition to his new home.