Puppy House-Training and Socialization

Mountain Mutts LLC
mountainmuttswv@gmail.com

House-Training Overview

Having a new puppy can be an exciting and sometimes challenging experience. As a new puppy owner, it is important to realize your role and how your behavior shapes the behavior of your growing puppy. Your influence over your puppy begins the moment you make first contact and then bring your new puppy home. Whether or not you are enrolled in formal training, you are still directing behavior and establishing patterns in your dog's life. By not teaching or setting limits your puppy understands, you are possibly contributing to future behavior patterns and problems. This is especially true when it comes to teaching your puppy proper house-training habits. The following is designed to teach owners to understand their puppy's house-training needs, curb problems before they start, and establish proper patterns that can last a lifetime.

Based on your effort, consistency, and guidance your puppy will quickly learn there is no other place to relieve himself or herself other than outdoors. Some puppies with 100% consistency on the owner's part, can grasp house-training in as little as seven to twenty-one days. Some puppies may take up to six months or more if consistency is not in place and other factors are involved.

What allows your house-training efforts to be successful? House-training will not be successful without supervision, consistency, and guidance on the part of human members of the household. The critical parts of house-training can be best summed up using the four-legged chair analogy. The four legs of the chair represent the four parts that contribute towards successful house-training effort. In order for a chair to stand, all four legs should be solid and equal. If one leg is missing, out of place, or shorter than the others, we have a chair that is unstable and falls over. The four-legged chair comparison help sum up the importance of the four parts that lead to effective house-training of your puppy. The four parts (or legs) of house training are:

1. Crate Training and Supervision
2. Regular Schedule
3. Feedback and Discipline
4. Cleaning up Accidents

Each of these parts plays an extremely important role in keeping dog owners and their puppies on track. Neglecting or short cutting just one of those parts could have serious implications. The

following plan is designed to teach owners to better understand their puppy's house-training needs, head-off problems, and establish proper patterns that last a lifetime.

Puppy Health and Medication

Before going into detail on the four parts of the house-training it is important to assess your puppy's overall health. Your puppy's health can greatly impact the success of your house-training efforts. Parasites, infections, viruses, GI upset, allergies (food or environment), and other health issues can impact your dog's elimination process and schedule.

Medications that your dog may be taking can also impact house-training. Some medications have side effects such as increased water intake, frequent urination, loose stools, constipation, to name a few. Consult with your veterinarian to determine if your dog's medication(s) could possibly be affecting your dog's water intake, appetite, or digestive process.

If you have any questions or concerns, consult with your veterinarian to verify that your puppy is healthy before and during your house-training efforts.

Crate Training and Supervision

- During the house-training process, your puppy should be supervised in the yard and house.
- The best way to prevent your puppy from misbehaving, injuring itself, and having house-training accidents is to use the crate.
- If you cannot supervise your puppy (away from home, sleeping, or unable to keep an eye on him/her) it should be confined to its crate.
- Your puppy's crate should not be used for punishment or time-out**.**
- Do not reward any barking or whining in the crate, only let the puppy out when it is quiet.
- Can feed meals in the crate to make positive associations.
- Do not leave water in the crate.
- Limit the amount of space your puppy has in the crate during the house-training process. The dog should have enough room to lay down, stand up, and turn around. If you have large breed you can buy a wire crate with a divider.
- During the house-training process you should remove all bedding and soft items from your dog's crate. Things like Nylabone or Kong that fit your dog's size and chewing style are more appropriate.
- You should not leave any type of collar on your puppy while in the crate.
- Children and adults should not pester the dog when it is in the crate.
- If you have multiple dogs, each dog should have their own individual crate.

- It is important that when your puppy is out of its crate that a responsible person is supervising 100% of the time.
- Without a crate or 24-hour-a-day direct supervision, your dog will choose his bathroom areas.
- At night or when away, secure your dog in his/her crate.
- You can begin to give you puppy more freedom in the house and yard only after he is reliably housetrained.

Regular Schedule

- A consistent schedule teaches your puppy that there are times to eat, drink, play, and go potty.
- By regulating your puppy's food and water intake, you will be able to determine the approximate times your puppy will need to relieve him or herself.
- Puppies must go to out to the bathroom first thing in the morning and the very last thing at night.
- Your puppy should not have access to water for at least two hours before the pre-bedtime bathroom break.
- In between bathroom breaks your puppy should be supervised 100% of the time by a responsible owner or in its crate.
- Do not crate your dog longer than you know he can wait to eliminate.
- As you proceed with house-training stretch the day's bathroom trips further apart each week by fifteen-minute intervals.
- In order to teach your puppy where to use the bathroom you should go outside with him each time.
- Put your puppy on a leash (five to six feet in length) and a secure collar when outside.
- When you take your puppy out you should take him to a designated bathroom area in the yard or near your home.
- Stand still in the bathroom area and allow the puppy to move around you.
- Associate a specific bathroom command or phrase when you reach the designated area.
- Once your puppy has finished going praise/reward him**.**
- The amount of time spent outdoors at each bathroom break should be consistent.
- Anytime your puppy relieves himself outside, you can provide him/her with supervised time out of the crate when you return to the house.
- There are a ton of great sample time schedules on the internet that can be adjusted to any schedule. If you need help finding one reach out.

Feedback and Discipline

- For a puppy to fully grasp the concept of house-training, they must make an attempt to relive themselves in the house, then be caught in the act, and effectively corrected as a result. Examples can be a sharp "No," stray bottle, or shaker can to startle them to give you time to get them to their potty spot.
- If you do not catch your puppy in the act of relieving him or herself indoors, then do not correct him/her for it.

- If your puppy does attempt relieve him or herself in the house, you will need to respond immediately, to catch him/her in the act.
- The best way for corrections to be effective is to catch your dog in the act or when they are preparing to relieve themselves indoors.
- Always take the puppy out to use the bathroom area to complete or finish what he attempted to do in the house.
- Corrections after the fact will result in apprehension or fear directed towards you and others.

Cleaning up Accidents

- All accidents should be cleaned as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.
- All areas should be soaked with an enzyme-activated odor and stain remover. Natures Miracle is a good cleaner.
- Re-application of you enzyme-activated cleaner may be required in some situations.