

"Crate Training Your Dog the PROPER Way"

Adapted from article written by Carol at Mulberry Farm

These are general timetables: Not everyone will be able to follow them precisely, since each dog has his own habits/physiology. For example, some dogs need to go out right after they have been fed, whereas others wait 30 min. or longer after eating before needing to go out.

Following is a house training schedule for your puppy. Once you learn how long nature needs to take its course, adapt the schedule to fit your needs. Just BE CONSISTENT. As your dog matures and the training progresses, give him longer and longer periods of freedom until he only needs confinement when you need to leave your home. Puppies should not be left alone in a crate for long periods of time.

GEN. TIMETABLE FOR 8-Wk to 12 WK. OLD PUPPIES

7:00 AM . . . Go out.
7:15 - 7:30 AM . . . Food and water in confined area, then remove food.
7:30 AM . . . Go out.
7:45 - 8:15 AM . . . Supervised play time.
8:15 AM . . . Go out.
8:30 - 9:00 . . . Supervised play time.
9:00 . . . Go out.
9:15 . . . Back in crate for nap
12:00 PM . . . Go out.
12:15 PM -12:30 PM . . . Food and water in confined area, then remove food.
12:30 PM . . . Go out.
12:45 - 1:15 PM . . . Supervised play time.
1:15 PM . . . Go out.
1:30 - 2:00 . . . Supervised play time.
2:00 . . . Go out.
2:15 . . . Back in crate for nap
5:00 PM . . . Go out.
5:15 PM - 5:30 PM . . . Food and water in confined area, then remove food.
5:30 PM . . . Go out.
5:45 - 6:15 PM . . . Supervised play time.
6:15 PM . . . Go out.
6:30 - 7:00 . . . Supervised play time.
7:00 . . . Go out.
7:00 - 7:30 . . . Supervised play time.
7:30 . . . Go out.
7:45 . . . Back in crate for nap.
9:30 or 10:00 PM . . . Go out for last time, then to bed in crate for the night.

TAKE THE PUPPY OUT WHEN

- *Immediately after he wakes up in the morning.
- *After every meal and drink of water.
 - *After he wakes up from a nap.
 - *Before any extra freedom period.
- *After extreme excitement and long play periods.
 - *The last thing at night.

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STAY ALERT between these times for signs that your puppy is "looking" to relieve himself (e.g., whining, acting restless, sniffing the floor, pacing around in circles). When you see him doing any/all of these things, try to distract his attention, then pick him up GENTLY, ring his bell, and rush him outside to his "toilet area." You may be going out 8 to 10 times the first few days; however, once the puppy settles into a routine, he should not have to go out more than 4 to 6 times a day, depending upon his age.

STICK TO A STRICT SCHEDULE. The more conscientious you are NOW, the more successful the training will be and the less "troubles" you will likely face down the road. It often takes some patience to make your puppy understand what you want him to do, but he WILL ADJUST to your schedule in time. Of course, there will likely be accidents; however, that's part of raising puppies. When your dog "makes a mistake" in the house, NEVER ABUSE HIM PHYSICALLY.

ALWAYS GO OUTSIDE WITH YOUR PUPPY during the training period. You want to see when and where he relieves himself, AND your ENTHUSIASTIC PRAISE will encourage him. Once the puppy is completely housebroken, it should not be mandatory that you accompany him outdoors. IF, however, you live in the city AND/OR don't have an enclosed yard, you MUST ALWAYS GO OUT WITH YOUR DOG: NEVER LET HIM ROAM FREE.

The LENGTH of supervised free periods depends upon a puppy's age. Once yours can handle a 30- minute free period with no accidents, give him more freedom by increasing his free time to 45 minutes, and so on. Your goal is to increase his free periods GRADUALLY until he needs to be confined ONLY while you are away from home. If the puppy's training regresses, it's back to "square-1": Start the training program FROM THE BEGINNING once more.