

Animal Behavior

~Counseling Services~

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HOUSE TRAINING

1. Fix feed –discuss the amount, type & frequency with your vet, then offer your pup discrete meals. Be sure to measure the amount, & only allow them 10 to 15 min. to eat then remove the food. Do not restrict his water.
2. Strict supervision- keep them with you or in their crates at all times so they don't have the opportunity to eliminate in the house. You can utilize a leash attached to your waist, or a baby gate to help keep your pup in the room with you. It is critical your pet practice being "clean" in all areas of the house, and be an integrated social member of the house. It will feel a little like "lock down" for a while, but it's important to establish at least 30 clean days to begin a new habit.
3. Clean accidents with an enzyme odor eliminator- this is a class of products & you can get the best ones from your vet. Be sure you never use anything with ammonia in it (the scent is too close to urine & may encourage your pup to urinate over it).
4. Log accidents-this helps to track your progress & identify any patterns with your accidents so you can correct any "weak links in the chain."
5. Your pup will need to eliminate: after eating or drinking, playing or chewing a bone, & sleeping. Be sure to let them out before you confine them for the day or put them to bed.
6. Create a potty routine- give him a cue like, "let's go out," then go out the same door, to a specific area of the yard (generally a 10 x 10 area). This helps your dog to understand that you aren't going out to play etc.
7. Go out with your pup- this is critical so that you know if & what he did so you don't let him back into the house unsupervised with a full bladder. This also allows you to reward elimination behavior. Note: if you reward him once he is back inside you are rewarding him for coming inside, not eliminating outside.
8. TREATS!!!- offer him great treats that he isn't allowed to have at any other time just as soon as he has eliminated outside. Example: small pieces of hotdog, cheese, chicken, liver etc. He needs to know that you love it that he went potty outside (no boring dog treats, they want to make a salary, not minimum wage). Be sure these treats are small (ex. the size of a pea).
9. No punishment- if you didn't see it you can't scold him, it's too late. If you catch him in the act just quickly get him outside & reward him for finishing. Punishment for housetraining is often counterproductive: typically dogs learn, "don't urinate in front of that guy," instead of, "don't urinate in the house." This leads to animals that seem "sneaky" and hide to eliminate making supervision difficult. They may also not feel comfortable eliminating in front of you in the yard so rewarding them will also be difficult.
10. Potty command- you can create a command to stimulate elimination. You can pick any word. Start this by giving the command AFTER your pup begins to eliminate at first, then softly praise so as not to distract him, then the second he's done give the treat & big praise (if you are clicker training you should click then treat & praise). If your pup hasn't gone after 5 min. or so don't spend all day in the yard. Come back inside, strictly supervise (ex. crate them, gate them in a room with you, tether him to you with a leash, or hold him if you have to), then go back outside in 5 min. Set a timer so you won't forget. Keep repeating this process until you know you can bring him back inside "empty".

The trick to housetraining is to supervise the animal so carefully that there isn't the opportunity to eliminate in the house, by default it all occurs outside where you can reward it. If you have followed these recommendations for a couple weeks & are still having trouble please call me. We can set up an appointment so that we can trouble shoot, and get your pup on the road to being house trained.