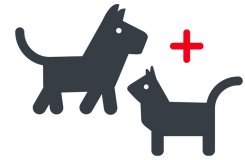


Toilet Training Your Puppy



**Maggie's
Rescue**

Toilet training is one of the most frustrating parts of owning a puppy. Many owners are doing the correct thing, but some are using some very outdated methods. Read on to learn the most effective and rewarding ways to toilet train your puppy.



**The basic points are
to be consistent,
patient, and don't
use punishment!!!**

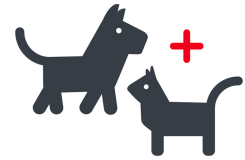
Important points in regards to houstraining include:

- Puppies do not know the rules of toileting until we teach them
- Puppies won't have complete control of their bladder until at least 16 weeks of age, so they physically can't hold on for long periods
- It feels good to empty their bladder and bowels (think about when YOU are busting for the toilet), so the actual toileting behaviour itself is rewarding for a puppy
- The more a puppy gets to practice relieving themselves inside, the slower the progress is
- This means that, initially, you will need to get up during the night to take your puppy out to the toilet
- Remember that your puppy's toilet training is a gradual process, so you need to have lots of patience and commitment, just like toilet training a toddler

Guidelines:

- Choose where you would like your puppy's toilet to be and make this consistent – puppies develop their toileting substrate preference around 9 weeks of age
- The most common times for puppies to use the toilet are after playing, sleeping, or eating. Ensure you take your puppy outside to the toilet after doing each of these things
- Signs of needing the toilet include: Circling, whining, pacing, going to the door, or sniffing
- Confining your puppy to a small area or room when inside the house, rather than letting them roam the whole house, will help you monitor your puppy for signs of needing the toilet and, thus, minimises accidents inside
- Restricting access to rugs and carpeted areas can also help minimise accidents indoors since these floor textures can remind the puppy of grass (a common toilet spot)
- Take your puppy out to the chosen toileting spot every 30-60 minutes (or as many times as they need)
- It is helpful to set a timer to remind yourself
- Someone will need to physically go with the puppy to the toileting area to ensure their safety
- Avoid distracting the puppy as they do their business; stand still and do nothing
- You can play with your puppy AFTER they have finished
- Praise your puppy after they have finished and give them a tasty treat
- It is NOT OKAY to open the backdoor, let your puppy outside, and watch them from a distance (this rule applies on a cold winter's night also!)
- Toileting on cue – choose a word/phrase e.g. “go potty” and say it each time the puppy toilets

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What to do when catching your puppy toileting inside:

If you catch your puppy toileting inside, DO NOT punish it – this may result in your puppy doing their business when you are not looking or not toileting when you are present.

- Calmly pick your puppy up, take them outside to the toilet area, and praise them when they finish in that area
- Puppies will generally toilet inside when owners have been slack in taking them outside, so an accident is a good reminder to be more vigilant with toilet breaks and monitoring for signs of needing to toilet
- Put a bell on your puppy's collar – this may help you hear your puppy get up from sleeping
- Clean soiled areas appropriately: Use a specific odour neutraliser for dogs (e.g. Urine Off™ or Biozet™) – this will help to neutralise the smell so the soiled area won't smell awful to the puppy. Do not use bleach or ammonia-based disinfectants, as they may enhance the smell and attract the pup back to that area

When No One Is Home

If possible, leave your puppy with outdoor access so that they have the opportunity to relieve themselves in the 'appropriate' toileting area. If this is not possible, and your puppy spends the time inside:

- Restrict their access to one room only
- Provide a toileting area (preferably a substrate that is similar to the outside toileting area), you can use: newspaper, puppy training pad, litter tray, and/or a large piece of turf/artificial grass

Punishment and Toilet Training

Punishment does NOT play a role in house training. Punishment can include verbal and/or physical reprimand.

- Hitting or rubbing a puppy's nose in their faeces is cruel and it will only confuse the puppy, making them distrust you and delaying the training process
- These punishment methods are completely outdated

If a puppy is punished for toileting in an inappropriate place, there is a good chance the puppy will then think it is being punished for toileting in front of YOU (or people). It won't actually realise that it is where it is toileting that is the problem, as this is too complex for any puppy to comprehend.

Therefore, punishment will likely result in your puppy becoming a 'sneaky toiler' and hiding from you to eliminate in the future.

Problem: My puppy won't toilet when taken outside but will toilet the minute they come back inside.

Possible reasons:

1. They may not have 'clicked' that outside is the appropriate place to toilet. Have patience!
2. Your puppy may be holding it in so that they can continue being outside with you because they have learned that as soon as they finish toileting, you go straight back inside again (playing outside is way more fun!)
3. Your puppy has been outside all day, and after coming home, you bring them inside before they have had the chance to toilet. Your puppy was likely asleep before you got home, then got excited and forgot to go to the toilet. When they go inside, they are busting to go!

Recommendation:

When taking your puppy outside to toilet, you need to ignore them whilst you wait patiently until they do their business (be unresponsive – don't make eye contact or talk). When they finish, praise immediately and then have a play session. This way your pup starts to have fun AFTER they have toileted, rewarding their behaviour. When you arrive home, ensure that your puppy has toileted. BEFORE bringing them inside.

Problem: My puppy hides inside to go to the toilet (e.g. In a quiet room or behind the couch)

Possible reasons:

1. Your puppy is possibly scared to toilet in front of you as they may have been previously punished for it. Punishment can include verbal and/or physical reprimand
2. It just hasn't 'clicked' yet that toileting inside is not the appropriate place

Recommendation:

This is a difficult situation because to help the toilet training process, your puppy needs to toilet in front of you so you can reward them immediately after. You may need to start rewarding your puppy for toileting anywhere (even if it is inside), so then you can start the toilet training process from the beginning.

Problem: My puppy urinates outside and then urinates immediately or soon after coming inside.

Possible reasons:

1. It may not have 'clicked' that outside is the appropriate place to toilet. Be patient with them
2. Your puppy hasn't 'emptied' completely while being outside, so they need to go again sooner than expected. If you reward them before they finish, start to walk off during your puppy's business, or if your puppy becomes distracted whilst toileting – the puppy can stop mid-stream and hasn't emptied completely

Recommendation:

When your puppy finally goes to the toilet, you need to be really patient and wait there until they have finished – don't walk away, make eye contact, or talk – but make sure you praise them AFTER they have finished toileting. Then, have a play and go inside.

