

House-Training

Bringing a new dog home will require some work on house-training! It is not uncommon for even well-established canines to have an accident or two when adjusting to a new home. Whether adopting a new puppy or an established, older dog, here are a few tips that should help you get started on the right paw!



- **Keep an eye on your dog!** When it comes to avoiding accidents, prevention is the best approach. Watch for signs that your dog may need to go out (circling, sniffing, or starting to squat) and be sure to get him or her outside quickly. If you catch the dog in the act, give a firm verbal correction (“no!”) to interrupt the behavior, and move your dog outside immediately. Reward your dog with treats and/or praise for using the bathroom outside. Consider crate-training or other containment during times when you cannot provide close supervision.



- **Stick with a schedule!** Dogs do well with a consistent routine and will be easier to house-break if they know when they’ll get to go outside. Take outside when s/he first gets up in the morning, after meal times, and promptly upon returning home. Feed at the same times each day.



- **Reinforce good behavior!** House-training requires practice and reinforcement! Make sure to always give your dog lots of praise and rewards any time s/he eliminates in an appropriate location. Keep a treat bag next to the door with your leash!



- **If there’s an accident...** Oops! You’ve missed the opportunity to train. Dogs will only relate an action to a consequence if the two happen within a couple seconds of each other. If you are finding an accident in the house after the fact, your dog will no longer associate the action (going to the bathroom on your floor) with any consequence. Just clean it up and try your best to prevent an accident in the future by more closely monitoring your dog.

Note: Some medical conditions can affect your dog’s ability to control where or when s/he goes to the bathroom. If you are having difficulty with house-training, and/or you notice that your dog is having diarrhea or frequently urinating very small amounts, please consult with your veterinarian.