



POTTY TRAINING

A Few Facts About Your Puppy

Your puppy has a very unique way of viewing the world. They are playful, easily distracted, balls of energy that like to chew on everything and go potty anywhere. Knowing a few key things will help you train your puppy and get the quickest results.

- **You have 3 seconds** to praise or punish before your dog no longer understands what you're so excited or upset about.
- **Puppies need consistency!** Everybody in the house needs to agree on the rules for the puppy and everybody needs to follow them. If a puppy is allowed on the couch one time, they think they are allowed on the couch all the time.
- Dogs need **120 repetitions** of something before they truly comprehend a command.
- Dogs are not capable of feeling guilt.

Potty Training

Potty training is often one of the most difficult tasks people face when they get their new puppy. Have no fear, the trainer is here to help! Potty training issues can be overcome by knowing what to look for and how to react! It is our goal to make this as swift and easy for both owner and puppy. Let's get started!

- **Prevention** : Preventing the accidents from happening in the first place is the best option because the less accidents your puppy has, the quicker they learn what they should be doing.
- **Reaction** : How you react when your puppy goes potty in the correct place or if they have an accident can have a huge impact on your dog's training. If your puppy goes potty in the correct spot, make sure you are rewarding them with treats, excited praise and lots of petting! Positive reinforcement shows your dog what you want them to do, so they understand what makes you happy! If your puppy has an accident, the best thing to do is to interrupt the behavior or, if you find a puddle on the floor, clean it up without punishing them for it.

Let's discuss this a bit deeper:

The Potty Zone

The potty zone is where you decide you want your dog to potty, be it on potty pads or outdoors. It is highly recommended to train even small dogs to go potty outside instead of on potty pads and they should not be used in the house "Just in case of accidents" because these pads actually encourage and teach your dog that going indoors is okay.

A perfect example of a potty zone would be a ten foot by ten foot square outside where you can walk your puppy to. By taking your puppy to the potty zone each and every time we go potty, your pup will learn that this is where we do our business, this is not a play zone. By establishing a potty zone, it also makes your life much easier as well. You can easily walk the small zone to pick up all messes without having to walk through the entire yard and, if there are children who play in your yard, it's easy for you to tell them where to avoid. Less poo on shoes is always a good thing!

So what do we do with the potty zone?

- Walk your puppy on the leash to the potty zone and tell them to "Go Potty" or whatever other command word you would like to use.
- If your puppy goes potty in the zone, make sure to use your clicker, give them a treat and praise them excitedly within 3 seconds of the action. By praising and treating your puppy **as soon** as they go, you're telling your puppy that you are happy with what they are doing.
- If your puppy gets distracted and doesn't go potty within 3 minutes, take them back inside. Place them in their kennel or a small bathroom for 10 minutes then try again.
- Additionally: Once your puppy has gone potty in the zone, make sure you take them out of the zone and play with them! **If a puppy gets to play after they go potty, they learn how to get it over with quickly so they can get to the fun stuff!** You'll appreciate a puppy who goes potty quickly when it's raining or cold outside!
- Eventually, you won't need to walk your dog to the potty zone, they'll know exactly where to go. Until we are potty trained though, keep that leash on and go out there with your pet.

Indoors

What you do indoors is just as important as what you're doing outside in the potty zone. Here are some things that can really help you keep your rugs clean and your house smelling fresh!

With the Puppy

- Keep your eye on your pet and limit the areas they are allowed to be in. If you get easily distracted or if your puppy is a ninja, the easiest way to do this is to use the **umbilical cord method**. This method consists of you keeping the leash attached to your puppy and tying the handle to your belt! If your puppy pulls at the leash to walk away from you, it either wants to eat, drink or go potty! Take them outside to the potty zone and prevent disaster!
- **Know the signs!** Has your puppy had a nap? Have they been playing or running? Have they had something to eat or drink? Then it's time to go potty! These behaviors can aggravate a puppy's bladder and make them have to go!
- **Put your puppy on a feeding schedule!** Don't leave food down all the time because that means your puppy's potty schedule could be chaos. By planning when they eat, you are better able to predict when it's time to go outside and do our business. Some dogs need to go right after they eat while others need about an hour until they're ready. Learn your dog's habits and go from there. This also has added benefits of keeping a better idea of how much your dog is eating and can help prevent obesity.
- **Get a Kennel and use it!** Dogs don't view kennels as jails, they come to see them as dens of safety where they can be comfortable. Make sure your kennel has only enough room for your puppy to stand up, turn around and lay down comfortably. By using a kennel, your pup learns to hold it better by using instincts they were born with.

- Potty training bells help you train your puppy to tell you when they have to go potty! No more guesswork! To find out how to add potty training bells to your routine, the trainer can provide that information.

If an accident occurs:

- **Interrupt the behavior** if you can! If you catch your puppy mid accident, pick them up and take them out to the potty zone. Praise them for any additional business they do outside!
- Put your puppy up in the kennel or a separate room so they cannot watch you clean it up. **The act of cleaning actually encourages puppies to go potty!** By letting them be elsewhere, we can take care of the mess.
- **Clean with the right products!** A majority of our regular housecleaning products have ammonia in them, which is the same smell that urine has which encourages puppies to continue going potty in the same places! Choose a dog specific product like “Nature’s Miracle” to clean up with. Dry up any wet spots, spray the cleaner and let it sit for 10 minutes. These cleaners are designed to remove the smell, even to your dog’s sensitive nose!

Other Notes:

- Don’t feed your puppy human food! Feeding your dog table scraps can hurt your potty training efforts. Their stomachs aren’t designed to digest we can as easily and this can cause a great upset and diarrhea.
- Take your puppy’s age into consideration: Puppies can’t fully control their bladders until they are 6 months old. Take your pup’s age in months and convert that into hours. That gives a good general guideline for how long they should be able to hold it. (Example: 4 months old = 4 hours) Not all dogs can follow this so you will have to adjust as your puppy needs.
- If you think your puppy is potty trained, the trainer’s rule is 2 months accident free!
- Environmental changes (moving to a new house, having a guest, new additions to the family) can cause issues with potty training and may require you to begin again.

Chewing

Chewing on furniture, shoes, socks, underwear and children is one of the most often complaints about puppies. It is a very natural behavior and this is how your dog learns about the world. They also relieve stress in this manner and it just plain feels good (to them!) If your puppy is chewing on everything in sight, here are a few things you can do to help with that!

- **A tired pup is a happy pup!** Exercise helps keep them out of trouble and wears them out so they don’t have any excess energy they feel like they need to get out by chewing. If you work and keep busy during the day, **consider taking your puppy to doggy day care** where they will get to play with other dogs and come home exhausted.
- Do not wave your hand in front of your puppy’s face, wrestle or play tug with your pet. These games all encourage the puppy to chew on you.
- **If your pet insists on chewing on your hands, remove them.** Squeal in a high pitched voice and hide them behind your back and wait until your pet loses interest. Give them an appropriate toy to chew on. The squealing imitates the cry of littermates when they’re in pain and helps your puppy understand that they hurt you. By ignoring them, they understand that they don’t get any attention or fun unless they play appropriately.
- Change out your puppy’s toys every three days to keep them “new and exciting”. Puppies can easily become bored with the same old toys.

- Flavored, natural chews are great for encouraging your puppy to chew on the correct things. **Cow Hooves** for smaller dogs or **deer antlers** for larger dogs are natural, healthy items that will last a while.
- **Make sure your puppy isn't left unsupervised** until they understand what they are or aren't allowed to chew on. Punishing your puppy doesn't work after the fact, remember the 3 second rule!
- **Bitter apple helps prevent chewing in the first place!** It is a deterrent which tastes terrible and is an excellent way to let your puppy learn that they don't want to chew on icky tasting things. Apply the spray three times a day for a week to anything they like to chew on. It's safe on skin as well, just don't put it in your mouth!
- Never hold your puppy's muzzle closed, hit, tap or smack its nose. This can scare dogs and create issues of fear or even aggression.
- If you catch your puppy chewing on the wrong thing, take it from them and instantly replace them with a toy your puppy can chew on.

Food

Make sure you're feeding your puppy a food that is appropriate for them. Small breed puppies have much different needs than large breed puppies. Between six months and one year, you'll be able to switch over to an adult food. Check the bag and look at the ingredients to make sure corn isn't one of the top four ingredients. Corn isn't easy to digest for dogs, which is why it's used as a filler by some brands of dog food. If it's not getting digested, that means more mess for you to pick up! Also, the higher the quality of food they eat, the less likely you are to suffer dog farts!

Look at the feeding chart on the bag of dog food. Find your dog's weight and look to see how much food it suggests feeding them. That amount is how much food your dog gets per day not per meal. The higher priced dog foods tend to feed less because they are more nutritionally dense, which means you get more per kibble (and less poo).

Puppies under 6 months should be fed 3 times daily. After they reach that age, you can change to twice daily. Make sure when you feed them, you put the bowl down for a limited amount of time, like 10 minutes. If your dog doesn't eat in those 10 minutes, pick it up and give it to them again when next meal time comes around.

If your puppy is a speed eater, look into a "slow feeder bowl" which makes your dog work for their food a little bit harder. We have a free training tip video all about slow feeding options

Don't give your dog human food if at all possible.

Health Concerns

Puppies need to see a vet several times their first year and have follow up visits every year after they reach the age of one. With their last set of puppy shots, **it is suggested that you get your pup spayed or neutered**. Doing so before they reach adulthood can help prevent issues with marking territory and other health issues. **Heartworms are a huge concern** in Mississippi and prevention must be provided **year round**.

- Heartworms are transmitted through the bite of a mosquito
- Dogs can get heartworms throughout the year, even in winter
- Heartworms will kill if not prevented or treated
- **It is cheaper to prevent heartworms than to treat your dog after they have them**

There are a couple of options for preventing heartworms. There are pills, like heartguard and trifexis which you give your dog once a month orally. There is also the option for a shot, called Proheart, which lasts six months which can help those of us who are forgetful; two shots a year and you've got year-round protection! Ask your vet for your options!

Trainer Suggested Products

- **Nature's Miracle** – A white or red bottle of potty accident cleaner designed to remove the smell so even your dog can't smell it! Spray the product on the spot and let soak for 10 minutes before cleaning it up
- **Potty Training bells** – A string of bells that your pup rings to let you know they need to go
- **Slow Feeding Bowl** – Optional, helps your puppy slow down their speed eating
- **Leash** – Not a retractable one! Get a sturdy 4 foot or 6 foot leash
- **Collar** – So your dog can wear their tags all the time
- **Harness** – Optional, especially suggested for small breed puppies or an Easy Walk Harness for dogs who like to pull
- **HEARTWORM PREVENTION** – All year round!