

## **CRATE TRAINING - YOUR PUPPY'S OWN PLACE****Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Your puppy will be a happier member of your family if he has a space of his own. Crates give puppies and dogs a place to rest or sleep, and they will come to feel safe and protected while they are in their 'room'. Place the crate near family activity in a draft free corner of the room. Add some comfortable bedding that can be easily washed for the puppy to snuggle into, and it is also recommended that you put a toy in the crate while the dog is secured in its kennel.

**Why** crate train your new dog? There are a variety of reasons:

- it is the best method for house breaking (instinct is to not soil where they must sleep).
- it prevents chewing or other destructive behavior on various items.
- it allows you all to get a good nights sleep without having crying or a grown dog jumping up onto the bed.
- traveling becomes easier as your pet will be acquainted with a crate (less likely to need sedation).
- if your dog needs to be looked after by someone else, he can take his own room along, decreasing the stress he experiences.
- you have the knowledge that puppy hasn't gotten into anything while you weren't at home.
- for some dogs, sleeping on the bed or furniture can contribute to dominant behaviors (only the more dominant members of the pack sleep in the most desirable areas).

The disadvantage to crate training is that it cannot be used if the pup is to be left for long periods (more than 6 hours) during the day.

**How** to go about it:

- start as soon as you get your puppy or dog. While dogs of any age can be crate trained, it is easier for them to adjust to a crate if they aren't used to sleeping on the bed.
- select a crate large enough for the adult dog to stand up and turn around in. While he is still a puppy, block the excess area of the kennel off so that he doesn't eliminate in the space where he isn't sleeping.
- don't keep the crate in an isolated area - kitchens and living rooms are often selected as 'social' areas. By keeping it social, the pup sees itself is a member of the new 'pack'.
- feed the puppy in its new house, as well as giving treats and toys inside. Some people find that a blanket draped over the crate makes it seem more like a den to the puppy. Leave the door of the kennel open while you are home, and always associate the crate with fun things, never punishment.
- don't leave food or water in the crate while puppy is being house broken. Puppies have a reflex that makes them want to eliminate after they eat or drink, and if he drinks too much he'll be uncomfortable. Water left in the crate can also be spilt and soak into the bedding.
- Put puppy in for a few minutes with the door closed, disciplining with a loud noise if he misbehaves. Try for 5 minutes at a time, letting the pup out when he is quiet to reward for good behavior. Do not let him out if he is barking, howling, whining or doing anything else that you do not want. Instead, make a loud noise and if he is quiet for more than 5 seconds, let him out. This lets him learn that he will not get out by making a fuss, and rewards quiet behavior with attention.
- Ensure that everyone respects your dog or puppy's privacy when he is in his special place; let him come out by himself, without having someone reaching in to take him out. He needs to feel safe in his special place.

You'll be glad you've crate trained your new dog or puppy when he goes there for his naps, or when he accepts changes in his environment as long as he has a special place. And you'll know that he's not getting into mischief, even when you're not there to watch him.