

PUPPY LOVE SHELTIERS
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"CRATE TRAINING YOUR PUPPY"

One of the first things owners teach their puppies is not to eliminate in the house. One very effective method - the one used by most breeders and trainers - is "crate training". Not only can you house train a puppy using a crate, but when it is used correctly, the dog naturally learns to look upon it as its den. The pup will seek out the crate when it wishes to rest undisturbed.

Crates come in different styles and sizes. Choose one that will be large enough for an adult dog of your puppy's breed to lie down, stand up and turn around in easily.

Many breeders use fiberglass (or plastic) airline crates. Avoid those with zinc nuts and bolts - they can poison a dog if swallowed. Wire crates work well and are fairly portable.

put the crate in a location close to other family members to lessen the puppy's anxieties. Move the crate from kitchen or family room to the bedroom at night, so your puppy will feel like part of its new family.

Remove the puppy's collar before it goes into its crate. Then be prepared for the pup's first experience with crate training; it will probably cry or whine. Offer a treat and close the door. Leave the room, but remain nearby. At the first sign of a separation response, such as barking, whining or howling, intervene with a sharp "NO!" Your pup should associate the reprimand with its actions and stop. It may take four or five tries, but it will eventually settle down.

Once the pup is quiet, keep it in the crate for 30 to 45 minutes. If it begins to cry, take it outside to relieve itself. Once that's accomplished, praise the pup, take it back inside and allow it free time outside the crate. If it starts chewing on something other than its toys, respond with a sharp "NO", take the object

away and replace it with a toy.

After 15 to 20 minutes of play time, put the pup back in the crate for a nap, correcting it if it cries. Your pup learns through association, so consistency should help it accept being in the crate after a few tries. When it has been quiet for an hour or so, repeat the process.

Be aware that your puppy will need to eliminate directly upon walking and shortly after eating or playing. Also, a very young puppy will not be able to hold its urine all night, so be prepared to take it out during the night.

Put your puppy on its leash immediately after letting it out of the crate. Rush the pup to the door or carry it if it's small, so it can avoid an accident. Be sure it relieves itself once outside.

Never place newspapers on the bottom of the crate - these will encourage the pup to eliminate there. After you're sure your puppy isn't wetting its bed, you can give it a towel or blanket, though it may be more comfortable without one.

Gradually lengthen the amount of time your puppy is allowed to play - when it's 5 or 6 months old, it should be able to control itself for an hour or so between trips outside.

The crate also aids in curbing destructive behavior, such as uncontrolled chewing. As your puppy matures and shows it can be left loose in the house, give it that privilege.

The crate itself cannot stop your puppy's need to chew when it's teething, so provide it with safe chewable toys and nylon or rawhide bones. If it continues to chew beyond the teething stage (about 8 months), it's probably bored, so try to spend more time with it.

By the time it is 8 months old (a bit older for giant breeds), it should be able to walk around the house for most of the day once it has been taken outside to relieve itself. By 1 year, it should be mature enough to be trusted all night in the house. But keep the crate set up with the door open anyway. Your pup will become attached to its own private "den" and will look for it.