

Tips on Crate Training



Why crate-train a dog?

- To help with housetraining -dogs don't like to go to the bathroom where they sleep.
- To prevent them from getting into trouble.
- To help prevent separation anxiety.
- To give them a safe place of their own -give them a break from visitors, children, etc.

Crate-Training Basics:

1. Do not force your dog into the crate -instead, toss some treats right at the front of it. Let them walk in and out whenever they want. Do not shut the door yet!
2. Gradually start tossing treats further and further into the crate and praise your dog for walking inside. Let them walk out whenever they want.
3. Once they stop leaving the crate right away, give them more treats while they are inside to encourage them to stay put.
4. When your dog is staying in the crate voluntarily for 10 seconds, you can shut the door, give them a treat, then open it. If they want to walk out, let them. If they choose to stay inside, give them extra treats and praise!
5. Repeat these steps and gradually increase the length of time between giving treats, and slowly increase the length of time the door is shut and locked.

6. Once your dog is able to stay put with the door shut, leave the room for a few seconds, then return and reward them!
7. Keep repeating these steps until your dog seems settled in the crate.

How big should the crate be?

- For housetraining -the crate should only be big enough for the dog to stand up, turn around, and lie down comfortably. If it's too big they will still have accidents in there.
- If the dog is house-trained the crate can be as large as you like.

Training Tips:

- Never use the crate as punishment.
- Always give your dog something to do while they are in the crate.
- Keep it comfy! Give them something soft to sleep on and put a blanket over the top/sides to make it feel more like a den.
- If your dog is not fond of the crate, feed them all of their meals in it until they are more comfortable with it.
- If they are sleeping in the crate at night, put it in your bedroom -dogs are social and want to be near you!
- If the crate is in a different part of the home, make sure the dog cannot see when people are coming and going from the home.
- Leave soft music or talk radio on in the room with them.
- For puppies, providing something warm and soft to snuggle up with will help them settle. A ticking clock in the room can also help them stop crying.

