



Crate Training

Crate training, often referred to as “crating”. Has numerous benefits and has made puppy-rearing a much less daunting task for many families. Crating is a training method used for the life of the animal; and you will find that once your dog has adjusted to his or her crate, it quickly becomes their ‘place’. (Often adult dogs that were crated as pups will choose to sleep in their crates, even without the doors on to keep them in.) The crate is a humane training tool and should never be used as punishment. Take care to choose the right size crate for your new pup, being sure that they can comfortably lie down and stand up while in the enclosure. Generally; you will only want to invest in a crate once, so please ask your adoption coordinator for assistance in choosing a size.

The most common use of crating is to assist in the housebreaking process. Generally crating for this purpose can be started when the puppy is 8 weeks old, although it is important to keep in mind that at 8 weeks the puppy’s bladder and mental capabilities may be limited- so expect accidents. But, if you are consistent in following the *When to Crate* guidelines, it will all pay off and your “puppy experience” will be more rewarding because of it! The YCSPCA requires those adopting puppies to crate train and we recommend starting the minute the pup arrives home. We are often asked if a small bathroom will work instead of a crate. The answer is no because the space is too large and allows for the pup to urinate/defecate in one area and not have to deal with the consequences.

Before a pup can be taught to go “potty” outside, it must first be taught bladder control, which is done in crating by confining the dog to the smallest space possible. As you would expect, puppies do not like having to sit in a small space with their “mess”, and because of that dislike they will attempt to “hold it” in. Each time this happens, they learn to control their bladder a bit longer. When a pup is first learning about crating the worst case scenario is that the puppy will cry, bark, or push itself up against the door of the kennel. Often times, covering the crate with a sheet or blanket will help alleviate some of this, and the pup will go to sleep for a few minutes. Please do not give in to the puppy’s whining, barking, or other attention getting stunts; otherwise it will learn to do them when it wants your attention. Be sure to withhold food and water several hours prior to the puppy’s bedtime as you won’t want them to go into their crate already needing to go to the bathroom.

After you place the puppy in its crate; close the door, say your goodnights, and cover the crate. When the pup wakes up in the middle of the night, it will be your prime training time to take him or her outside to go to the bathroom. Put your little furry friend back in the crate after all business is done and start the process all over again. An 8 week old puppy can be expected to wake every 1-2 hours and a 12 week old puppy can often hold

it as long as 6 hours. This is how you can tell that those “sleep experts” who say to get 8 uninterrupted hours of sleep at night don't have puppies!

Puppies have our highest return rate between 8 to 12 months, during which time they are going through their rebellious “teenage” months. During these months crating can be a wonderful tool in preventing chewing. As pups start losing their “baby” teeth, they begin to chew on whatever is available to them. Using the crate when you are not home or when you cannot watch the dog will help prevent the destruction of your lovely home.

Another use for crating is to help adult dogs with separation anxiety. Sadly, some rescued dogs never forget being left behind by a former “family” and fear it happening again. Please ask us for advice if you feel that you need to crate for this purpose and we will be happy to discuss it with you.

Give crating a chance and we are confident that you will see the many benefits! Crates are available at Petco, Wal-mart, and Petsmart etc. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to ask!

Thank you.

Crate Training Guidelines

1. Never place food or water in a crate
2. Never speak to, hit or kick the crate or remove the dog to stop it from barking/crying.
3. Crate training must be done 100% of the time.
4. Covering the crate so that the dog cannot see out often helps the dog adjust when first using this method.
5. Never let your kids or other animals play in the crate, as it is your dog's personal home and they can feel their space is being invaded.
6. Be sure to line the crate with something that can either be thrown away or washed a lot.
7. Feel free to place toys in the crate with the dog, as it adds some entertainment.

When to Crate

1. At night until you trust that they are 100% housebroken.
2. When you are not home, to prevent “Accidents” and chewing.
3. When you cannot watch the dog but fear that he or she will perform an undesirable behavior, such as urinating on the floor or chewing of your shoes.

Where to put the crate

Place the crate inside your home in a room that is not high traffic, where you will be able to hear the pup if it cries. If you place the crate in your bedroom, please realize that your sleep will suffer.