

# HOUSE TRAINING

## Training

House training can be hard work, but at the heart of it, it is very simple. Your dog needs to learn where the toilet area is and where it isn't. The sooner the association between "on limits" and "off limits" areas can be made, the better. This can be a daunting task, but ultimately quite simple if you follow these rules:

1. **Consistently take your to the designated toileting area.**
2. **Reward handsomely for using the designated area.**
3. **Supervise or confine your dog when his bladder/bowels are full.**

Let's break these steps down.

### 1. Consistency

Dogs develop a "substrate preference" very early on. This means that what they feel under their paws becomes a preferred toileting area. Porous surfaces like carpet and grass are preferred over tiles. We want to decide on the substrate of our final toilet spot (be it the grass outside or the concrete courtyard) and stick to it, so that he can develop an association with this area early on.

He must be taken to this area:

- a) first thing in the morning
- b) after each meal
- c) after play or other physical activity
- d) after naps
- e) every 45-90 minutes in between, depending on the size of his bladder
- f) last thing before bed time
- g) at least once during night time



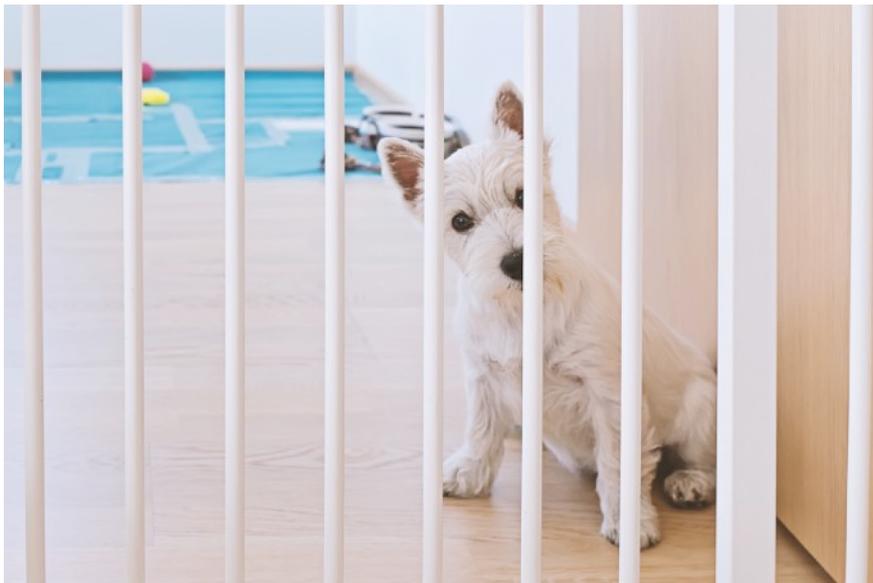
It's recommended to take him out overnight, but if you can't do this, you can set up a confinement space. This includes a bed or crate in one corner, and a pee area in the opposite corner. Puppy pads can be used, but if your desired toilet is grass, it's best to cover the pad with a square of astroturf. A long term confinement area will unfortunately slow down training, but it will allow you to get some sleep until your dog is able to control himself physically overnight (usually at about 6 months).

## 2. Reward

Accompany your dog to the toilet area, either staying close by or on a leash. Do not carry him to the area—you want him to learn how to walk there himself. While you wait, do not give too much attention; keep things low key. Just before you see him about to go, use a cue phrase like “toilet time”, “weewee”, “nature calls” or “empty” (the choice is yours, just use the same one every time). Just as he finishes, lavish with praise and three of his favourite treats.

## 3. Supervision

If your dog is given freedom to eliminate wherever he chooses, this dilutes the distinction between on-limits areas (e.g. outside on the grass) and off-limits areas (everywhere else). Each time he urinates or defecates, he builds an olfactory (smell), visual (sight) and tactile (touch) association with that area. The next time he is in the area, the **smell of urine** plus the **feel of the carpet** plus the **sight of the door frame** triggers him to urinate once again in this area. You can prevent this association from forming inside the house, and direct it outside. In this way, he learns the **sight of the designation pegs/tape/poles**, the **feel of the grass** and the **smell of urine** will trigger elimination in the correct area every time.



For this reason, you will need to supervise your dog at all times when his bladder/bowels are filling up. This means that when you are available, you need to watch him constantly or tether him to you with a leash while you work or go about your day in the house. When you are not available to supervise, keep him behind a baby gate, put him in a puppy pen, or crate train. Once you have established a reliable distinction between on and off-limits areas, you can provide more freedom. During this phase, keep a look out for behaviours such as sniffing, scratching, circling and pacing, which indicate that he needs to eliminate. Quickly accompany him to the designated area and remember to reward for successful elimination in the right spot.

## Cleaning

If your dog does have an accident, clean the area thoroughly.

- a) Avoid the use of ammonia based detergents (like JIK and Handy Andy) as this will encourage repeated elimination in the area.
- b) Use an enzymatic cleaner such as Bio-Classic in order to remove the biological elements that we cannot smell. Wash thoroughly and rinse well with warm water.
- c) Spray with rubbing alcohol/surgical spirits and leave to dry (after doing a spot test on the fabric to ensure no damage is done to the material).
- d) Repeat Step (a) and (b) to ensure the smell has been sufficiently removed from the area.

