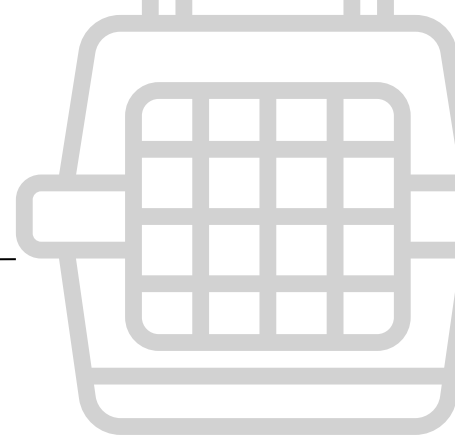


Crate Training

A B a s i c O u t l i n e



Importance of Crate Training

Crate training is important for puppy owners because it helps create a safe, secure space for the dog. It **makes house training easier** by teaching bladder control and preventing accidents. It provides a comfortable, den-like environment that **encourages rest, helps with managing destructive behavior** when unsupervised, and assists in travel, vet visits or emergencies. Additionally, **crate training promotes independence and reduces separation anxiety**, making life more manageable for both the dog and the owner.

1

Choose the Right Crate

- **Size:** The crate should be large enough for your dog to stand up, turn around, and lie down comfortably, but not so big that they can use one corner as a bathroom.
- **Type:** Choose between wire, plastic, or fabric crates, depending on your dog's needs (e.g., wire crates provide more visibility; plastic crates feel more den-like).
- **Comfort:** Unless your dog is destructive, add a soft blanket or bed, ensuring the crate feels cozy and inviting.

2

Introduce the Crate Gradually

- **Place the Crate in a Central Area:** Set it in a location where your dog spends a lot of time, such as the living room, so they don't feel isolated.
- **Keep the Door Open:** Let your dog explore the crate on their own terms with the door open. Don't force them in.
- **Use Positive Associations:** Toss treats, toys, or kibble inside the crate to encourage your dog to enter. You can even feed them meals near or inside the crate to build a positive connection.



3

Make the Crate a Fun Place

- **Play Inside the Crate:** Place a favorite toy or a stuffed Kong in the crate so the dog associates the crate with playtime and fun.
- **Reward Voluntary Entry:** When your dog goes into the crate on their own, praise them or give a treat.
- **Keep the Door Open:** Let your dog go in and out freely while building positive feelings about the crate.

4

Start Closing the Door Briefly

- **Short Intervals:** Once your dog is comfortable entering the crate, start closing the door for short periods while they're inside, but stay nearby.
- **Stay Calm:** If your dog seems nervous or whines, don't immediately open the door. Instead, wait until they are calm before letting them out. This teaches them that being calm is the way to get the door open.
- **Increase Time Gradually:** Slowly increase the time the door is closed, starting with just a few seconds and working up to minutes as your dog gets comfortable.

5

Extend Crate Time

- **Practice with You Nearby:** Once your dog is comfortable in the crate for a few minutes, begin leaving them in the crate while you're in the room.
- **Leave the Room Briefly:** Start leaving the room for short periods and come back after a few minutes. Gradually extend the amount of time you're gone.
- **Use Treats & Praise:** Always reward your dog when they are calm and relaxed in the crate, especially as you start leaving them for longer periods.



6

Teach Your Dog to Enter on Cue

- **Use a Cue Word:** Choose a simple phrase like "crate" or "bed" to signal your dog to enter the crate. Say the cue word as your dog enters, then give a treat.
- **Practice Regularly:** Practice using the cue word daily, rewarding your dog each time they enter the crate on command.

7

Crate for Short Periods While You're Home

- **Crate for Naps:** When your dog is tired, encourage them to nap in the crate. This normalizes crate time as part of their daily routine.
- **Avoid Over-Crating:** Don't leave your dog crated for too long while you're home. Crating for short periods helps them adjust, but too much can make them anxious.

8

Gradually Crate Overnight

- **Start at Bedtime:** Once your dog is comfortable in the crate during the day, try crating them at night. Place the crate in your bedroom at first, so your dog feels secure. Then graduate to keeping it outside the bedroom.
- **Be Consistent:** If your dog whines during the night, take them out for a bathroom break but return them to the crate afterward.
- **Reassurance:** Place a piece of your clothing or a soft toy in the crate to provide comfort during the night.

9

Crate When Leaving the House

- **Start with Short Outings:** When you need to leave your dog alone, crate them for short outings (e.g., 30 minutes to an hour). Avoid making a big deal when leaving or returning to prevent separation anxiety.
- **Calm Entries and Exits:** Wait until your dog is calm before letting them out of the crate when you return. This prevents hyper-excitement from being associated with the end of crate time.

10

Handling Setbacks

- **Stay Patient:** If your dog resists or seems anxious, slow down the process and make crate time shorter, leaving the door open and using high value treats/chews. Try using a leash to gently assist them in.
- **How to Avoid Using as a Punishment:** It is the tone of how you go about getting your dog into the crate that makes it a punishment. If your dog is being wild and needs a time out, calmly put them into their crate vs aggravated-ly.

General Tips:

- **Consistency is Key:** Stick to a regular schedule with crate training, particularly for meals, naps, and house training.
- **Make it a Routine:** Create a predictable routine around crate time, such as using it after play sessions or when your dog is winding down.
- **Exercise Before Crating:** Give your dog plenty of exercise and mental stimulation before crating them to ensure they're ready to rest.