

Jefferson Animal Hospital
Fern Creek
6902 Bardstown Rd, Louisville, KY 40291
(502) 499-6535

Jefferson Animal Hospital
24hr Emergency & Wellness Center
4504 Outer Loop, Louisville, KY 40291
(502) 966-4104

House Training Your New Puppy

When to Begin

It's best to start as early as possible to start house training your new puppy. They learn very quickly and it's best to choose one method of potty training, such as outdoor potty training or puppy pad training. Trying to teach your puppy to do both can be a challenge and may confuse the puppy.

Putting your puppy on a schedule

Although it seems that a puppy is in a constant state of elimination, his body functions are fairly predictable. He feels the urge to relieve himself after he wakes up, after he eats and drinks, and after he plays. If you have your puppy on a steady schedule for these activities, you'll know when to take him outside.

First thing in the morning, be sure to take your puppy straight to where you want him to eliminate (You may need to carry your puppy to avoid any accidents). Give your puppy about 5-10 minutes to eliminate and don't let the "potty time" turn into play time or your puppy will always assume it's play time instead of potty time when taken to this area. When your puppy eliminates, be sure to praise your puppy while they are eliminating, this way they will associate eliminating with good praise. If your puppy only urinates but has not defecated (or visa versa), you may take him back inside and crate or confine them for 5-10 minutes, then take them back to their spot to finish.

Now it's time to eat! It's important that you schedule your puppy's meals at a time that's convenient for you so you won't be forced to alter the routine from day to day. Allow your puppy only 15-20 minutes to eat his meal. If he loses interest in his food in less time, assume he's full and take his dish away. After meal time is over, take your puppy back to where you want them to eliminate. When the mission is accomplished, praise him and bring him back inside. You'll have to repeat this same routine with each meal (the purpose is to train the puppy's body according to your schedule). A secondary benefit is that the dog will learn to eat when he's fed so his food isn't going to be left out for him to nibble whenever he feels like it.

Naturally, between meals there are going to be times when the puppy will have to go out. If he's been romping or playing, assume a potty time is necessary. If he's been napping, he should go out when he wakes up. If he starts acting nervous and sniffs around, he's signaling for an outing. If you can't be with the puppy all the time; when he's not under a watchful eye, he should be crated or confined. When puppy is having a free play time, be sure that he is not allowed to free roam the house as he pleases. Usually it's best to tether the puppy to you or confine them to one room while being closely watched.

It's best to remember the general rule of thumb for puppies while house training. Whatever the age of the puppy is generally about how long they can hold it for, plus one hour. So if your puppy is three months old, they should be able to "hold it" for four hours. Of course this also depends on the size of your puppy.