

HOUSE TRAINING

By Terena and Nancy Thomas

Training your dog takes a lot of effort for several weeks. NOT training your dog takes unpleasant effort in the form of embarrassment, odor, germs, cleaning, and expensive carpet replacement that could go on for 10 to 15 years!! It is much easier to train right in the first place! Make a serious commitment and stick to it. You will be glad that you did!



1. Any spots where your dog has urinated in the past must be thoroughly treated before beginning these steps toward having a trustworthy dog. Urine and ammonia odors attract dogs back to an area to leave more puddles! If you wish to shampoo the carpet, do it first. Then saturate all areas that have been used as a toilet, with white vinegar, and blot well by stepping on the spot that has been covered with a thick layer of paper towels. If possible block off the targeted room until training is completed. You may close the door or use a baby gate, cardboard barrier or even a few chairs to keep your student out of the area.
2. Have your veterinarian check a fecal sample from your dog for worms.
3. Feed a high quality dry dog food. Changing the diet or adding table scraps invites trouble. We have had good results with Science Diet and Iams brand dog food, available at your vet, feed or pet supply stores. It is low in bulk and creates smaller stools. Do not feed semi-moist or highly salted feeds.
4. Dogs thrive on monotony. A regular routine is a **MUST!** It takes the stress off of your dog to know he will always be let out at a certain time, and always have food, water, and exercise at a set time everyday (including weekends). This is a major key to success in house training!
5. If there is ever a puddle or pile in your home, it is **YOUR** fault!! Your dog should not see you on your knees cleaning up after him. Put him up first. Blot the spot well (or pick up the pile) then saturate well the entire area with white vinegar and blot well again with paper towels by stepping on them over the spot. You may yell while cleaning if it makes you feel better (it won't help the dog).
6. If you catch him in the act of going in the house, yell "stop" swoop him up and outside. Wait for your dog to finish and praise him for using the right spot!! **DON'T** spank him for his mistakes (or yours). It teaches him to eliminate where you can't see him (behind the couch/in another room, etc.). It does not help him understand what you want!
7. During the night is the easiest time to have your dog under control. We highly recommend using a dog den (crate) just large enough for him to stand up and lay down comfortably. You may choose to use a buckle collar on your dog with a chain type leash

to tether him to the bed leg. A dog will seldom soil his sleeping area unless he has no choice. This forces your dog to whine and let you know he needs to go out. That's the first step to success **COMMUNICATION!!** Your dog is letting you know his needs!! Praise him lots. Jump out of bed quickly and rush your dog immediately out to the chosen location. **STAY WITH HIM!** While your dog is "going" **PRAISE, PRAISE, PRAISE!** This is how he learns what pleases you. It is essential that your dog sleep in your room where you can hear him or you can forget house training now!

8. Set a schedule and stick to it!! When writing up your schedule remember: feed at set times, your dog must go out to eliminate first thing in the morning, immediately after eating, drinking, or napping and before retiring for the night. He should be taken out at least once every two hours for pups! Four hours for over 6 months. Pick up food and water in between times to avoid errors. Withhold all food and water for at least three hours before bedtime.

9. When you cannot watch closely for any signs he needs to be taken out such as: circling and sniffing, staring at you or the door, whining, or walking back and forth rather uneasy, he must be confined. You may choose to tether him to the desk or table where you will be close. You may have him stay in a crate or you may put him in a fenced yard or dog run. **NEVER** allow your pet loose and out of sight in the house even for an instant to answer the phone. Take him with you to answer the phone or door. I like to keep a leash in my pocket or close by for such distractions. I keep several around the house for easy access.

10. Pour on the praise every time your dog eliminates outside! This is one of the most important points to remember. Bestowing lots of praise on your dog for correct behavior will teach him where you want him to go to relieve himself.

I have found a convenient way to get dogs outside quickly and still be able to watch them while I stay warm and dry. I use a 20 to 40 foot nylon rope with a clip on one end. These are available from hardware or pet supply stores. I take the dog to the back door quickly at the first whine or "look" from the dog. I attach the clip, open the door, and let the dog pull the line out as long as needed. The other end of the line (the handle) is then looped over the inside doorknob to anchor it. I watch through the door opening, or a nearby window. As soon as I see the dog urinate and/or defecate I stick my head out and praise with lots of enthusiasm. This should be done while the dog is "in the act". When the performance is over I call the dog in and tell him again what a terrific job he did as I unfasten the clip. I get several extra practices teaching my dog to come as well as have him relieve himself. Always watch while your dog is tied out!! I've gotten so good at this I can do it in the wee hours of the morning and return to bed without ever waking-up! Stick to these 10 commandments to control puddles and piles and soon you can rest easy too!

Sample schedule (for puppies, adjust to your dog's food needs):

Upon awakening	walk, feed, water, walk
Noon	walk, feed, water, walk
4- 5 pm	walk, feed, water,
7 pm	walk, water
Bedtime	walk

In between these times play, exercise, teach, and allow the dog to rest under your close supervision or confinement. Don't set your dog up for failure!! SET YOUR DOG UP FOR SUCCESS!!

In the event that none of the above mentioned solutions eliminate your problem, the Canine Country School can tailor a training method suitable for you and your dog. Call today to schedule a private personal consultation.

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