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Where a Dog Can Be Just a Dog-Gone Dog!

## Potty Training Tips

Lots of people have problems potty training their puppy. It seems this issue can be harder with very small dogs, because it is easier for them to sneak around and find places to potty when you aren't looking! A few tips on potty training:

- Feed your puppy on a regular schedule. Generally suggested for puppies are 3 meals a day (morning, noon, and night). This regular feeding schedule helps create predictable bowel movements. Puppies should be taken outside to potty no more than 20-30 minutes after finishing eating.
- Take your puppy out to potty **on leash** every time while you are in the training stages, even if you have a fenced in yard. Keep telling the puppy to "Go Potty!" (You could also use a less offensive command like "Do Your Business!" or "Hurry up!" if you are worried about what the neighbors will think... just make sure you are saying the same thing every time.) This will take a lot of persistence on your part because puppies have short attention spans and may get distracted by something outside. Puppies often get too busy exploring or playing and forget to potty... so remember that even if your pup has been outside for 20 minutes, if he hasn't been directed to "do his business," he may have forgotten to potty! **Just keep moving the puppy along on leash (tug leash to keep moving/get attention back if needed) and giving your potty command over and over.** When puppy finally potties, give LOTS of praise and a treat!
- Consider crate training your puppy. A crate or kennel helps your puppy learn how to develop a stronger bladder and bowels. A general schedule is to give a meal, take puppy outside to potty, and then crate him for 2-5 hours. Repeat this process 3-5 times a day. Make sure crate is big enough for your puppy to stand up and turn around in, but no bigger. A kennel that's too big may leave room for your puppy to potty on one end of the kennel and "live" on the other end. For growing puppies, you may have to buy bigger kennels as the puppy gets bigger.
- Remember the particular times puppies generally have to potty **RIGHT AWAY: after playing, eating, drinking a lot, or sleeping.** Take puppy outside on leash immediately after these activities for better success!
- In the morning, take puppy out to potty **FIRST** thing... before you make coffee, brush your teeth, etc. Don't send puppy out in yard alone. Put on leash and follow instructions in bullet #2 above. By doing this, you are teaching him or her what is expected—and where and when. Routines and schedules help a dog get used to what you are teaching.
- No water after 7 PM. Just offer ice chips if puppy has had lots of activity and seems thirsty.