

## Cavalier Housetraining Problems

**An owner of a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel puppy is frustrated with housetraining.**

*By Allan Reznik*

Q. I am so thankful to be able to ask this question to someone I know will have an answer, finally!

We got a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Labor Day weekend. She is now 6 months old. We also have a 3-year-old Golden Retriever. Both dogs love one another very much!

We have done everything we can think of to potty train Delilah! She still picks her spots to soil, which are anywhere and everywhere. I've actually seen her squat and pee on a throw on the couch with my husband under it.

She does not seem to get it. We do not allow her to play when it's potty time. We reward her with a treat when she goes outside, then praise her loudly. We have started showing her the poop or pee, chastising her loudly, and putting her in her cage for a few minutes. Nothing seems to work. Yes, we are consistent, and no, she does not have any health problems and has been spayed. Please tell us what to do. We are in our 60s and don't think we can keep this up! We love her so very much!

A. Cavaliers are not particularly difficult to housetrain, but it sounds like you're using her crate as punishment rather than as a training aid. If she is picking spots indoors to pee and poop – including the throw on the couch – then she is not understanding what you want her to do.

Keep her confined to a crate for meals and naps, then take her out immediately on a leash – pick her up and carry her if you think walking her in the house will prompt her to relieve herself indoors. Take her to the same place outdoors and stand still, using a command word to encourage her. She should eventually get bored and relieve herself. Then give her lots of praise, a little walk as a reward, and limited freedom in the house, under supervision. Too many owners walk the dog hoping it will eliminate, and as soon as the dog does, the walk is over, and the dog is brought indoors. Not much incentive to eliminate quickly and lose out on the reward (walk). That explains dogs that get a long walk, do nothing, and then promptly eliminate once inside.

If Delilah does not relieve herself outdoors, then it's back in the crate and out again in another hour or two.

She should be fed at regular intervals, breakfast and dinner, and crated at bedtime (with the crate in your bedroom so she gets accustomed to your sleeping schedule).

She can't have the same privileges as your adult Golden until she is housetrained. No free run of the house. Use the crate and a baby gate until she is housetrained and trustworthy.