

## Puppy Training Problems

**If crate training won't work for your puppy, try paper training.**

*Jon Geller, DVM*

Q. I have a Golden Retriever puppy. We got her when she was 8 weeks old and now she is 14 weeks old. We both work, so we have to crate train her. The problem we were having is she keeps pooping in her crate. Yes, we bought her a small crate with just enough room to lie down. The other night we took her out and she peed like she was supposed to but would not poop, so we put her back in the crate and went up to bed. Within 5 minutes, she barked so my husband went down to see if she had pooped and she didn't in the crate! I have a neighbor bringing her out around 3:00 p.m. but when my neighbor gets there she has already pooped in her crate. When my neighbor cleans it up and takes her out--she will only pee. She'll put a clean towel in the crate and by the time my husband gets home around 5:30 she had pooped again. When she does poop outside, we reward her with treats.

Please help us. We were told that dogs will not go to the bathroom where they sleep. Does this mean she doesn't like her crate?

A. I am sorry to hear about your housetraining problems with your puppy. It is unusual for a puppy to defecate in her crate, but it sounds like you have an exception.

I would abandon the crate training and try something more conventional, such as paper training. Leave out a large area of newspaper leading up to the back door, and reward your puppy when she poops on the paper. Gradually make the area of paper smaller until it is just in front of the door outside, and finally remove it when your puppy waits by the door to go outside.

In the meantime, continue to take your dog on short walks after she eats, and give her small rewards when she goes outside.

Once your puppy is housetrained, you can then reintroduce the crate if that is where you prefer that she stay when you are not home. She may do better overnight if she's left out of her crate and allowed to wake you up to go outside.

Best, Jon Geller, DVM

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