

Crate Problems

What to do if your pup poops in the crate.

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Q. My fianc and I bought a Bulldog puppy in May 2005. He is now almost 10 months old. He's a great dog other than his one major flaw. We keep him in a crate while were at work. At least twice a week well find his crate full of feces and urine once we get home. Not only does he poop all over, he walks and lies in it, requiring us to give him a bath to clean him up. We have someone who comes to let him out around noon whenever they can, but now that it is winter, that is not much of an option anymore. The vet told us he should grow out of this by about 6 months, but that time has come and gone, and my fianc doesn't know how much more of this he can take. His kennel is just big enough that he can turn around and lie down. We used to put a blanket on the bottom, but got sick of washing it everyday. We now line it with newspaper to make clean up easier. We feed him two meals at night and nothing but water in the morning to try to reduce his urge to have a bowel movement during the day while at work. We don't know what else to do. Please tell me you have some suggestions!

A. Although most dogs will not soil their crates, some will, so confining them to a crate doesn't make sense until they're thoroughly housetrained. Does your dog have accidents in the house while you're home, or overnight? If so, you need to start with a consistent housetraining program.

If your Bulldog appears to be housetrained, then leaving him in a crate all day is not a good plan. He may be showing some evidence of separation anxiety, or inappropriate elimination.

Here are a couple of suggestions, assuming he is housetrained:

1. Have a neighbor come over to let him out in the middle of the day.
2. Take him to a doggie day-care facility.
3. Allow him to live in a room in the house with a dog door to a fenced area outside.

Best,Jon Geller, DVM

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