

How to Housetrain

A veterinarian explains the best way to housetrain your dog.

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Be aware that teaching your dog or puppy to eliminate on newspaper, puppy pads (large disposable absorbent pads made especially for this purpose, available wherever pet supplies are sold), or dog litter will make it more difficult for you to teach your dog to eliminate outside. Dogs who always eliminate indoors may be reluctant to ever eliminate outdoors.

To train a puppy or dog to use newspapers or puppy pads, confine him to an area just large enough for a bed, food, water, and the elimination material. Since he won't want to eliminate in his bed or food, he'll go there. Once the dog reliably uses the paper or pad, gradually allow him access to a larger area. If all goes well, he will return to the paper or pad for elimination. To train a puppy or dog to use a dog litter box, either use the confinement method just discussed or treat the box as you would a dog's outdoor elimination area, taking him to it whenever he might need to eliminate and praising him lavishly when he does. If despite consistent training methods your dog still eliminates in inappropriate places, consult your veterinarian. A urinary tract infection, anatomic abnormality, parasite, or other problem could be contributing to house-training failure.

- Back to the Behavior Area - Return to Ask the Vet About Dogs

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