

House Training

You might think it would come naturally, but toileting outdoors is not something that all dogs will do automatically. Dogs need us to show them that this is the right thing to do, and encourage them into forming good habits!

All puppies need patient and consistent house training. It's very normal for a puppy to take a few months to be completely housetrained without the odd accident, so don't worry if it seems to be taking a while! Adult dogs that have had no previous house training may take longer to change their habits, but again don't worry, this is still very achievable.

Top tips

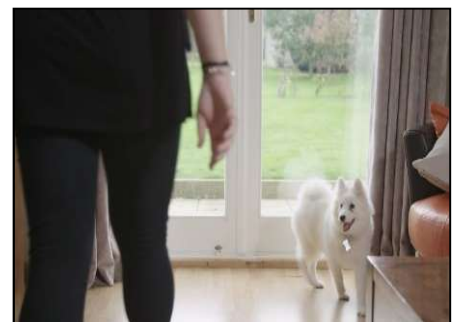
- 🐾 Patience is key. All dogs are individuals and some might take longer to learn than others, but it's well worth the time and effort!
- 🐾 Give plenty of the 'right' opportunities for your dog to practise good toileting behaviour.
- 🐾 Puppies have very small bladders so will need to relieve themselves often while they develop.
- 🐾 Accidents will happen, clean up and move on! Telling your dog off might make them anxious about going to the toilet, which may make them harder to train.
- 🐾 Leaving the door to the garden open so a dog can come and go is very common, especially during the summer months. However doing so may slow down learning because the dog doesn't necessarily learn the difference between indoors and outside.



Teaching your dog to toilet outside

Investing time in training will save time in the long run. The more committed and consistent everyone involved in your dog's care is, the quicker your dog will learn!

- 🐾 Take your dog out to the toilet approximately every hour, and especially:
 - after a sleep
 - after eating or drinking
 - after play or exercise
 - whenever they get excited, for example when visitors arrive
- 🐾 Go out with your dog come rain or shine, whatever the time of day. Stand quietly and wait, be boring! If your dog goes to the toilet reward them, if not just return quietly indoors. Don't be in too much of a rush to get them back in, give them enough time to try.
- 🐾 Watch your dog carefully and learn to recognise the signs they need to toilet. They might start to sniff the floor, turn in a circle and start to squat. If you see these signs in the house, calmly interrupt them and pop them outside to see if they'll toilet, and reward them if they do.
- 🐾 Your dog may soon ask to be taken outside by whining and moving towards the door when they need to toilet. Again, make sure you respond appropriately to their communication by taking them out and rewarding them for toileting.



- ❃ Teaching your dog to toilet when asked can be useful to encourage them to go when it is most convenient for you. Every time you notice your dog about to begin toileting, quietly say the phrase you're going to use, such as 'busy busy' or 'be quick'. Say this just as they begin to go so that, over time and repetition, they can learn to associate your words with what they are doing. When they've finished reward them straight away as usual!
- ❃ If you're consistent and do this every time they're toileting in front of you, after a while practising you can try prompting them to toilet. Take them to a usual toileting spot at a usual toileting time. Say your phrase and see if they respond by toileting. If they do reward as usual, if they don't simply continue practising for a while longer before trying again!
- ❃ If your dog has an accident, don't worry! It's likely to happen so just be prepared. Don't tell them off, simply clean up when they are in another room. Use a biological, enzymatic cleaner (e.g. commercial products for removing urine marks) that can break down the urine and does not contain ammonia, as the smell of this might entice your dog to toilet there again!



If your dog is struggling with house training, going to the toilet very frequently, drinking a lot, and following this advice does not appear to be helping, then take your dog to your vet to check for medical conditions that might be causing accidents.

Dogs Trust provide lifelong behavioural support for all our adopted dogs. If you need help for your

Dogs Trust dog please email: postadoptionssupport@dogstrust.org.uk



Your nearest Dogs Trust Dog School Team are also happy to help and can be contacted via: www.dogstrustdogschool.org.uk

The advice contained in this handout is of a general nature and is no substitute for specific behavioural or veterinary advice. If you are worried about your dog, then do consult your vet.