



Crate Training Your Dog

Having a safe and secure place for your dog can be reassuring and is very helpful during potty training. Keep in mind that confinement should not be problematic once a pet learns that it is safe and secure. But until the pet is comfortable being confined, he may resist. Therefore, it is important to slowly teach your dog how to be confined and to relax.

1. Find a location where you wish to place your dog's crate where he will be out of the way of foot traffic but where he will still be included as a part of the family. This can be in a bedroom, laundry room, or living room.

2. If your dog has not been in a crate before, you may need to leave the door open for a day or two and practice teaching your dog to enter the crate. To do this, toss treats just inside the entrance of crate giving the cue, "Go to bed" in a friendly tone and allow your dog to walk in and out of it as he pleases. When he is comfortable walking in and out, practice tossing the treats deeper into the crate and allowing them to walk in and out. When your dog is comfortable stepping all the way into the crate, practice opening and closing the door.

3. When your dog tolerates the door being closed, stay with them in the room for a short amount of time. A good starting point may be between 10-30 seconds; then gradually increase to 2 minutes till you reach 10 minutes. If the dog is **calm** and **quite** the whole time, they can be released.

4. Gradually increase the amount of time your dog is in the crate, but always intersperse short confinement times with longer ones.

5. Once your dog is doing well with you present, you can step outside the room briefly and then return. Gradually increase the amount of time outside the room, but again, always intersperse short departures with longer ones.

□ It is important to **ignore** the pet upon return and calmly sit down. Only release them if they are calm.

6. When you are ready to begin leaving your dog in the crate for longer periods of time (hours), cue them to enter the crate and leave them with a distraction such as a chew toy, a treat dispensing puzzle toy like a Kong, or a tasty chewie.

7. Be sure to avoid letting your dog out when he is barking, whining, crying, or scratching; an exception should be made if the pet is in a state of extreme panic and is in danger of injuring itself.



Tip: *If your dog still won't settle down, try feeding his meals in his crate!*