

A happy start at home

THE HEYDOODS FAMILY GUIDE / POTTY TRAINING + CRATE TIME

Welcome to the HeyDoods community! Your puppy is learning a new home, routine, and family. Progress comes from consistency, patience, supervision, and celebrating the little wins. This guide is a starting point; adjust it to your puppy's age, needs, and your veterinarian's advice.

Potty training: build the routine

- Take your puppy to the same designated potty spot **immediately after waking**, after eating or drinking, after play, after crate time, and before bed.
- For young puppies, offer frequent daytime trips, often **every 30–60 minutes while awake** at first. Increase intervals gradually as your puppy succeeds.
- Go outside on leash, use one simple cue such as “go potty,” and give your puppy a quiet moment to focus.
- Praise and reward **immediately after** they finish outdoors. A small treat makes the connection clear.
- Watch for sniffing, circling, wandering away, or sudden restlessness. Those are signals to head outside.

What if there is an accident?

Interrupt gently if you catch it happening and calmly take your puppy outside. Never punish, scold, or rub their nose in it. Clean indoor accidents thoroughly with an **enzymatic pet cleaner** to remove lingering scent.

Supervision is the secret

When your puppy is awake, keep them in sight, tethered near you, or in a puppy-safe playpen. If you cannot supervise, use a comfortably sized crate for an appropriate short rest period. Freedom around the house is earned gradually, not all at once.

Remember: A puppy's bladder control varies by age and individual. Excitement, sleep, meals, and activity all affect timing. Young puppies often need overnight potty breaks.

Crate time, the positive way

A SAFE PLACE TO REST, NOT A PUNISHMENT

The goal is for your puppy to feel secure in the crate. Start small and make every experience predictable and positive.

Set up the crate

- Choose a crate large enough to stand, turn around, and lie down comfortably, but not so large that one end becomes a potty area. Use a divider as your puppy grows.
- Place it in a comfortable, well-ventilated area near family activity. Keep it away from direct heat or intense sun.
- Use safe bedding only if your puppy does not chew or swallow it. Remove collars or harnesses if they could snag.
- Offer treats, meals, or a safe food-stuffed toy inside while you supervise. Always provide water appropriate to the duration and conditions.

A gentle crate introduction

- **Step 1:** Leave the door open. Toss treats inside and let your puppy explore by choice.
- **Step 2:** Feed a meal or reward quiet moments inside. Close the door briefly while you remain nearby.
- **Step 3:** Build from seconds to a few minutes, then gradually increase time and distance only while your puppy stays comfortable.
- **Step 4:** Practice after potty and play, when your puppy is ready to settle. Keep departures and returns calm.

How long is too long?

Crate duration should reflect age, bladder capacity, comfort, and time spent sleeping. **Do not use a fixed “one hour per month of age” rule as a target.** Very young puppies need frequent potty, movement, social contact, and feeding breaks. Avoid extended daytime confinement; use a puppy-safe pen or arrange care if you will be away longer.

Important: If your puppy shows sustained panic, frantic escape attempts, drooling, or distress that escalates, shorten the session and seek help from a qualified positive-reinforcement trainer or veterinarian. “Crying it out” is not the goal.

Your first weeks together

A SIMPLE RHYTHM FOR YOUR PUPPY

Sample daytime cycle

This is a repeatable pattern, not a strict clock schedule. Puppies need lots of sleep and may need additional potty trips between activities.

WHEN	WHAT TO DO
Wake up	Go straight outside to potty; reward success.
Breakfast / water	Serve meal, then potty again soon afterward.
Play + bonding	Short, supervised play and training; watch for potty cues.
Wind down	Potty, then a brief positive crate nap or rest.
After nap	Outside immediately; repeat the cycle.
Evening + bedtime	Gentle play, potty after meals, final potty before sleep.

Helpful reminders

- Keep meals and bedtime as consistent as practical. Track potty successes and accidents for the first week to spot patterns.
- At night, keep potty trips calm, brief, and boring. Some young puppies still need scheduled overnight trips.
- Never withhold water to prevent accidents. Ask your vet if your puppy has unusual thirst, straining, diarrhea, frequent urination, or sudden regression.
- Training is not linear. New environments, visitors, growth, and excitement can cause temporary setbacks.

We are here for you. Every puppy learns at their own pace. Be consistent, celebrate progress, and reach out whenever you need guidance.

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