

Crate to Potty: The Puppy Routine

A practical guide for those little bladders that just cannot wait. Build a predictable routine, prevent accidents, and celebrate progress.

CRATE

→

POTTY

→

SUPERVISED PLAY

The first five minutes after the crate

1. Prepare first: shoes on, door unlocked, leash and rewards ready before opening the crate.
2. For puppies who squat before reaching the door, gently pick them up directly from the crate and carry them to the potty spot.
3. Set them down at the same safe potty area. Wait quietly, using a consistent cue such as “go potty.”
4. The instant they finish, reward with praise and a tiny treat while still outside.
5. After a successful potty trip, enjoy closely supervised playtime or cuddles.

What if your puppy does not go?

Wait calmly for about 5 minutes. If nothing happens, go back inside for close supervision (or a short, comfortable crate break) and try again in 5–10 minutes. Avoid unrestricted roaming until they have had a potty opportunity and you can supervise closely.

Little bladders, big feelings

Excitement and a full bladder can lead to an accident the moment the crate opens. This is not stubbornness. Carrying a small puppy directly outside can be a temporary bridge while bladder control and routines develop.

HeyDoods

DOODLES • FAMILY RESOURCES

Raised with intention. Loved for life.

POTTY TRAINING MADE SIMPLE

Potty Success, Step by Step

When to offer a potty break

- Immediately after waking or coming out of the crate
- After meals, drinking, and active play
- Before bedtime and before a longer crate rest
- Frequently during awake time: some young puppies may need a chance every 20–30 minutes during energetic play; adjust to your puppy's age and patterns

If they squat on the way outside

Stay calm. If they have not started urinating, gently carry them outside. If they are already peeing, do not startle, scold, or rush them midstream. Clean the area with a pet-safe enzymatic cleaner and adjust the next trip to happen sooner.

Troubleshooting common setbacks

Peed outside, then had an accident indoors? Some puppies do not fully empty their bladder on the first try. Allow another quiet opportunity outside before play and supervise closely afterward.

Sniffing, circling, wandering away, or sudden restlessness? Treat these as early signals to go outside right away.

Accidents keep happening? Reduce roaming space, use a leash or playpen for supervision, and record when accidents occur to identify a more effective schedule.

Quick family checklist

- Potty supplies ready before opening the crate
- Carry puppy outside if they cannot make it to the door
- Same potty spot and cue each time
- Reward immediately outdoors
- Supervised freedom after potty; repeat consistently

When to check with your veterinarian

Contact your veterinarian if your puppy urinates unusually often, strains, cries while urinating, has blood in urine, seems unwell, or suddenly regresses after previously doing well. These can indicate a medical issue rather than a training problem.

HeyDoods reminder: Consistency beats perfection. Accidents are information, not a reason to punish. Keep it positive and celebrate the little wins!