

Crates

I highly recommend crate training your dog. If you travel with your dog, it will be accepted at more hotels, and as a guest at friends and relatives homes, you have the option of putting your dog in a crate. When your dog goes to the groomer or to the vet, and has to stay for any length of time, they will be crated. Better to teach them to be comfortable in a crate now, then when they are already under stress.

Buy the size crate that your dog will need when it's an adult. While it's a puppy you can block off the back with a box or laundry basket. They also make crates with a divider in them. This way he/she won't be able to pee in the back of the crate and sleep in the front of the crate.

A plastic or wire metal crate is fine. It's personal preference. The metal crates can fold together like a suitcase. They are easy to transport and store. I find that these crates have more air flow in the summer. However if your dog has an accident in this crate, it is possible that things could leak outside the crate and you'll be cleaning up the floor. To make it more like a den, you could put a sheet over the top. The plastic crates are also collapsible, but they're more difficult to store and handle. However if your dog has an accident in a fiberglass crate, it doesn't leak out and they are very easy to clean. Dog hair stays in the fiberglass crate, not in the metal crates.



When crate training puppies I have special chew toys for the crate only, such as a sterilized beef bone. I sometimes put peanut butter in the bone, so they are entertained in the crate. I also toss a small cookie in the crate at bedtime to tempt the puppy in on its own. I reward the puppy, again, with another cookie when the door is closed. Don't forget to praise, praise and praise! Keep the crate a very positive place to be. NEVER use a crate as punishment. A short crate training video is posted on my website. It is entertaining and fun to watch!

If you are going to have your puppy sleep in a crate at night, don't crate him/her while you are at work. Make some other arrangement. Invest in a large outdoor kennel (at least 8' x 14') with a cover (I use a heavy duty tarp) and a well-insulated dog house as an adult dog (although by then they should be house trained). Your puppy will be much happier in an outdoor enclosure during the day, than in a crate and it will be safe. It's not fair to expect a puppy or adult dog to be in the crate all day and night. It's one or the other. As soon as you get home make sure you're spending quality time with the pup/adult dog.