

How to Have a 'Pee-Free' Home

In this article based on Karen Pryor's work, you're going to learn how to quickly potty train your dog. For a lot of dog owners, potty training can be very frustrating but it doesn't have to be. Simply follow these tips.

Whether you have a new puppy, who is just starting his potty training or you have an older dog that you have just adopted or rescued, you'll learn a short, simple process for teaching, or re-teaching, your dog to be fully house trained in a very short period of time.

We'll discuss the reasons most dogs fail to become potty trained, and how to avoid the pitfalls all together and if needed, you'll learn how to quickly re-teach your dog the new potty-training rules of your house.

You'll learn some realistic expectations about how long it should take you to fully potty train your dog. This way, you won't get discouraged by thinking your dog should be fully house trained after only working with your dog for a week.

So, let's get started.

Here are some expectations you can realistically have for how long it will take you to potty train your dog.

For a puppy: Puppies do not have fully developed bladder muscles until they're at least 4-6 months old. So, depending on how old your puppy is, it's unrealistic to expect your dog to be potty trained before this time.

If properly trained, you should be able to have your puppy potty trained by six months of age. Some puppies may be potty trained at four months by following these guidelines.

For Adult Dogs: If your dog is older than six months old, it's got a bladder that is fully capable of holding it, so lucky for you, you should be able to fully potty train your dog in less than 30 days by following this program. And you might just find your dog may potty train in as quickly as 10-14 days.



The **MOST** important rule for potty training:

Your dog will make mistakes, and you will NEED to use a carpet cleanser, that is designed specifically for removing dog urine, for this program to work for you. If your dog pees all over your house and it is not cleaned up properly, that old urine smell will act like a Homing Beacon every time your dog smells it. Dogs have a reflex that triggers them to go on spots they've peed on before, so failing to clean up messes and remove all odors will make it nearly impossible to potty train your dog. Vinegar and some of the oxy clean products do a good job at removing all trace odors of urine. Read labels and select the best product for your home.

If you're reading this and realizing that you haven't done a good job of cleaning up past accidents, please consider having your carpets shampooed or re-clean old urine stains as best as you can. It'll make your progress go MUCH faster.

Concept #1: Why Your Dog Isn't Potty Trained ~ the Rental Car Treatment

In order to know how to successfully potty train your dog, you need to understand that dogs have a sort of reflex, or instinct, that makes them not pee or poop in their own territory.

In short, if they think it's theirs, they won't soil it.

But, the really strange part about this instinct or reflex is that if they know something is NOT theirs and it belongs to someone else's, they WILL! Which, unfortunately, means in their mind if they soil it then that acts to mark it as their own.

One trainer likens this to a 'Rental Car Agreement'. Read on...

What do people instinctively do when they get into a nice, new rental car? They drive it hard and they park it too close to other cars where it might get dinged. They'll peel out the tires and do essentially whatever they want with the rental car.

But, if that car was their own, and they were just driving it off the lot, would their behavior be the same?

Of course not!

We treat it with respect because it's ours.

Well, that's a lot like your dog treats your carpet. If your dog thinks that the carpet in your home is inside his territory he'll treat it with respect, as if it were his own. And if it thinks it's OUTSIDE of his territory, he'll feel more than obliged to soak it in an attempt to claim it.

You may have noticed this by realizing that there are certain areas of your house that your dog does NOT pee in and others that it does. And, as a general rule of thumb, this 'rental car treatment' concept is to blame.

So, the trick to successfully potty training a dog is in using this Rental Car Treatment concept against it... for your dog's and your home's own good. That instinct to not 'go' in its own bed is a powerful one, and if used strategically, is usually able to quickly teach dogs to hold it.

Concept # 2: Teaching Your Dog Where it is OK to Go is Easier Then Teaching Where NOT To Go.

Let me ask you a question. Have you ever seen a mother tell a young child to NOT do something, like don't touch that, or don't climb up on the couch? How effective is the word 'No' to that child? For most young children the 'No' command is almost always completely ignored.

And, it turns out there's a very good reason for this. Scientists have proven over and over again, in countless studies, that it is much easier to train someone or something to do something, instead of not to do something.

To NOT do something is a more advanced concept to the mind of a child or an animal. And, it's much easier to teach a child or animal to do something else then it is to teach them to not do the behavior at all.

This is one of the reasons why yelling is less effective than rewarding the good behaviors your dog does. In the case of potty training your dog, this means that it will be easier to teach your dog where it SHOULD go potty, instead of trying to use punishment to teach it where it should NOT go potty. If you focus on what you want it to do, instead of what you don't want your dog to do, you'll get faster results.

Teaching your dog where it's OK to go is very important, and one of the reasons why so many people are never successful in potty training their dogs. They just

spend too much time yelling at their dog for peeing and pooping in their home, and never actually rewarding and praising it for going where it's supposed to go.

After all, how would a dog even know that it's supposed to go outside?

Dogs don't speak English, and just because we might yell at our dog as we catch it in the middle of peeing on the floor and then rush him outside where it finishes it off... doesn't mean we did an effective job at telling it that outside was where it was supposed to go. We are usually too focused on getting it NOT to go inside, instead of going outside.

Expert trainer Karen Pryor, discusses why this concept works in her great book called, *'Don't Shoot the Dog'*. If you haven't read the book you should pick up a copy and read every word.

The concept of Zero, nothing, and not doing are hard for animals to understand.

So, here's what that means for your potty training efforts.

It is easier to train your dog to pee in a specific spot, than it is to NOT train your dog to pee in a specific spot.

And sadly, almost all people focus their potty-training efforts on teaching their dog to NOT pee in certain spots instead of peeing in a zone. And that's why potty training a dog is so frustrating for so many people. Because they're focusing all their efforts on teaching a concept that animals have a VERY hard time understanding.

Concept #3: *Increasing Your Attendance Percentage* the More Pees You Witness the Faster Potty Training Goes

The more you let your dog potty where he's not supposed to, and fail to reward and coach him on where he's supposed to go, the longer it will take you to potty train your dog, period.

This last concept although given last, may be the most important because while you can't potty train your dog without it, it's one that gives you a little more leeway for mistakes. However, if you really buy into this third concept and do your best to follow it, it makes all the difference in how quickly your dog becomes potty trained.

Here's what the concept of 'Increasing Your Attendance Percentage' means.

It means that that the higher percentages of your dog's bathroom breaks you can personally witness, the faster it will become potty trained. And that the lower percentage of bathroom breaks you can personally witness your dog taking, the slower your dog will learn to be potty trained.

Here's the reason why. Scientific studies have proven, without a shadow of a doubt, that those behaviors that get rewarded increase. And that the more you reward a particular behavior, the more it is repeated. And conversely, if a behavior is NOT rewarded it decreases in frequency.

So how does this apply to potty training?

Here's an example. Let's assume I run an Internet-based, animal training business, I have the luxury of working from home and because I knew of these three concepts when I got my puppy, I personally witnessed 99 out of every 100 bathroom breaks my dog took in his first few months of life. This allowed me to catch my dog before he would go in the house, quickly and calmly rush him outside, and reward every single bathroom break.

So, surprise, surprise, guess what happened? The behavior I rewarded more frequently increased – Peeing OUTSIDE!

I realize that you may not have the opportunity to attend that same percentage of bathroom breaks for your dog. Some of you will, but certainly not all, and I want you to know that it doesn't take a 99% attendance rate to potty train your dog.

Just try to be there for as many successful bathroom breaks as possible. The more you attend, the faster your potty training can go. If you have a situation where you really can't be with your dog for a large portion of the day, the key thing to do is make sure that your dog doesn't spend all day long peeing where he's not supposed to... like all over your house. Non- potty trained dogs that are left alone in a house all day long, with unrestricted access, are spending more time learning bad habits than they are being reinforced for good ones.

Overview of the Potty Training Process

So now that we've covered the three main concepts that make the difference between a dog who becomes quickly trained and a dog who never seems to get it, it's time to put these concepts into action.

Outline of the whole potty-training process:

1. Do NOT Give Dog Access To House When Unsupervised
2. Have Dog Neutered As Soon As Vet Recommends (6 Months)
3. Use Crates At Night Time & When Unsupervised
4. Supervise Your Dog When You're Home
 - a. Use Baby Gates To Enlarge Personal Territory
 - i. Room should be next to outside door
 - ii. Add different textures to floor
 - b. Watch For Pre-Pee Signs After Feeding, Drinking or Exercise
 - i. Interrupt EVERY Pre-Pee Routine
 - ii. Take Dog Outside To Finish
 - iii. Reward Heavily When Dog Finishes
5. After 1 Week Attach Bell To Door
 - a. Have Dog Bump Bell Before Going Outside To Potty
6. Continue Until Dog STOPS Pre-Pee Routine And Starts Ringing Bell
7. Enlarge Gated Territory ½ A Room At A Time & Repeat Process
 - a. Do not give dog access to new rooms until it has mastered not peeing in one room first and will not soil floor mats or rugs or other surface.
 - b. Some dogs need to be gradually exposed to carpet as it's tempting to pee on. Expose to carpeted rooms slower.
8. Clean Up Messes With Pet Deodorizing Cleansers That Get Rid Of All Smells
9. Don't Let Other Dogs Come Over Until Potty Trained

Please note: This article is a composite of notes taken while reading books on training dogs. Unfortunately, records were not kept on the name of the books or their authors as it was always intended for personal use only. The use of this article is intended to be given for newly adopted rescues and at no cost. This is not original work and cannot be footnoted.