



Aprils K911 Academy Potty Training Basics 101 (HANDOUTS)

Howdy Folks! We need to understand how to train your puppies and older dogs where to potty, and I'm going to teach you an easy way to do it too. Remember they don't speak English . . .

To accomplish potty training in your home, you will have to show your dog in terms that he will understand. This is going to take a lot of time, patience, consistency and observation on your part to correct and teach them what is acceptable. Spending time now will save you tons of frustration later.

* Dogs are denning animals. They have a natural instinct to potty away from where they sleep. This is true unless we can have no choice which could be the case for those who were born/live in a puppy mill, pet stores, or a shelter. In these instances they have to eliminate where they sleep. Sometimes potty training includes **re-training**.

* Dogs are also pack animals and learn all they know from watching others in the pack so you are going to have to teach your puppies where to go.

**If you are always home with your puppy than any time that I refer to putting your puppy on a potty pad, you could also take them outside to his special place to potty. Please keep in mind that ten feet maybe a long way to your friend, so you may need to carry him to his special place whether it's a potty pad in his safe room, outside or both.



THESE ARE VERY IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER BEFORE YOU EVEN START TRAINING!

1. Puppies can "hold it" 1 hour for every month old they are

As a general rule this is true, yes some can hold it most of the night even if they're only 2 months old. Metabolisms slow down when we sleep. When they wake that's when rule 4 comes into play. So get them to their potty pad right away, and use a simple, clearly spoken cue word when they potty, such as "potty". Use the same word for both peeing and pooping as dogs do not understand that both need to be done in their special place. This is why some pups will poop outside than come inside to pee. They just haven't learned they are supposed to pee outside also.

2. Dogs won't potty in their dens (what is their den?)

This rule applies to everyone except those who have been taught otherwise from circumstances such as those discussed above. All dogs that have learned otherwise can still be re-trained. Just start from the beginning. Please understand that for a small puppy or even a small dog, the whole house being the den is just **way too big for them** to understand. So you really need to start with a much smaller space until they understand it includes your huge home. When will they know you ask? Well that depends on each dog themselves. How quickly your puppy responds, and accepts each situation determines when you are able to proceed to the next step. It may take months before your able to let your puppy have the run of the whole house.

For Pete's sake! Don't let your puppy run the house from the get go and expect him to not pee, poop n tear things up. He's like a two year old with need of diapers! If you do, don't you forget that Blu told you so!

3. Dogs potty anywhere from 2 mins-30 minutes after they eat

Okay now what? Watch your pup and see how long after eating that he has to potty, then get him to his potty pad. Use his cue word after he potties.



Rewarding him with praise; perhaps a small treat afterwards will help instill the proper place to potty. Some signs that tell you your puppy needs to potty is when they're smelling around for that old pee spot, circling, whining, or arching their backs, perhaps with their tail over their backs. Then there's the squat, which usually means it's too late! Your goal is to prevent accidents so if you watch your pup carefully you will be able to get him to his potty pad BEFORE he has an accident.

4. Puppies will potty after they eat, sleep & play

Free feeding will NOT help you potty train your puppy. If your pup is on a schedule you will not only be able to know when he needs to potty, but you will also be establishing yourself as pack leader. Pack leaders eat the best foods and before the rest of the pack. You, putting down the food 2 or 3 times a day for only 20 minutes until the next feeding also tells the pup you're in charge. Try to keep your routine of playing after eating. Of course you already realized that your pup must go straight to his potty place as soon as he awakens even from a short nap.

5. Dogs will return to the same place(s) to potty

Since we are pack animals we have the instinct to potty wherever we smell it. This helps teach us to learn to potty outside our den like the adults. Now if there are previous smells in your den where some dog had an accident, we will continue to go back there unless you show us differently and remove the previous smell. Our smellers are 5 times greater than yours so even if you clean it up with bleach. . . . nana nana nana, we can still smell it! So my human uses a product that has an enzyme AND friendly bacteria in it that will break down the potty so it will no longer be there for us to smell.

Things TO DO:

Expect mistakes. Have realistic expectations. They are only dogs you know. Like human babies, puppies will go through learning stages.



Supervise, Supervise, Supervise! Keep your puppy in sight at all times until he demonstrates he's trustworthy. This includes chewing and tearing up things like puppies do as they are teething. **Preventing mistakes is easier** than cleaning up, replacing items; and prevents habits from forming. This is where a safe room will be a life saver for most busy humans.

Puppies don't understand after the fact that they made a mistake, so just clean them up using an appropriate product that has enzymes & friendly bacteria in it.

If you catch your puppy about to make a mistake, or in the process, startle him and use a negative marker, "eh", without anger in it to let him know that what he's doing is wrong. Then nicely, take him to his appropriate place and let him know in a nice voice to "potty here" even if he has just finished some place else.

Praise your puppy for performing correct behavior and try to keep to a routine.

Things NOT TO DO:

*Never hit or yell at your dog. He will learn to fear you and will start to hid from you to potty because he thinks you're mad at him for potty-ing. He doesn't understand that it is where he's going potty that you're angry with. No discipline is okay until you are certain your pup understands what is expected of him.

*Don't rub the pups face in it as he'll have no idea why, although some dogs have been potty trained despite this action. Your body language tells him you are displeased with him, but he won't know why. Positive reinforcement achieves better results, and teaching him what is expected will minimize mistakes.

*Don't stress if your dog seems to understand where you want him to potty, than starts having accidents. He probably forgot or you stressed him by changing his schedule. Expectations. . . Just go back to the step he



seemed to understand well and don't rush him to the next step until he is ready. Every dog is different. We aren't like your old, great, smart dog. We are all different.

ONE SMALL NOTE: Health issues, changes in the household, diet or your own body language may cause your potty trained companion to have relapses or to mark his territory. This is where returning to a routine or simple obedience training will come in handy. Obedience training will re-establish you as the top dog.

Now that you're armed with some doggy knowledge, one of the easiest ways to teach your puppy proper potty ethics is to make your puppy a safe room in which he must be kept in at **all times unless he has constant supervision**. Even if you decide to take your puppy outside every time he needs to potty, keeping him in his safe room when he isn't supervised will save a few things from getting chewed on etc. Isn't this what you do with human babies? I think you call it a playpen.

You can use a puppy proof bathroom or laundry room when you are gone, but what about when your home? Keeping your pup in constant isolation may produce a poorly socialized or aggressive pup. So what do you use? Portable fencing is sold so that you can section off a part of your kitchen for his safe room. The kitchen is good because it's next to the living area where he can still see most of his pack. Your puppy should always be in his safe room unless he's under strict supervision to prevent accidents. Now within this smaller area you would place a soft bed only big enough for him to lie on. If you have a very young puppy or your house is cold you may want to place a heating pad at night, set on low, under his bed to help keep him warm. In place of his bed you could substitute his kennel if you are using one and leave the door open. What's important to remember though is that if his kennel is too large, he will use the extra area to potty in, so if you bought a big kennel to fit him later, put a divider or a box in the back to keep him from having too much area. If you have a climber you could substitute a very large open kennel for his safe room.



In his safe room you will cover the entire floor with potty pads, if you don't your puppy will have to choose where to potty, on the pad or on the floor. They will potty wherever they happen to be, and with cold weather your puppy may not want to go outside to potty.

Wouldn't you rather your puppy use the pads than your floor? And instead of kicking him outside when you're gone you can leave him inside his safe room and with water too as he will potty on his pads. He can even be left in there all night instead of you having to get up every few hours to let him out to potty.

TEACHING TIPS FOR CRYING WHILE IN SAFE ROOM & USING A CRATE

But he will cry you say. Well okay, teach him its time to go to bed. If you pick him up when he cries he will be training you. Put him to bed, tell him "bed" and go out of his sight. When he cries, use a squirt bottle set on stream with just water in it so you can reach him from several feet. When you squirt him use a negative marker, "eh" to let him know that crying is not acceptable. As soon as he quits crying, which he will because you just squirted him, praise him for being quiet and again tell him to go to "bed". Don't plan on going to bed right away. You will probably have to do this 4 or 5 times. After he goes to sleep, if he's used to going outside and waking you up, he will cry as usual. Just ignore him and he will eventually potty on his potty pads and go back to sleep on his bed. Repeat this routine every night until he gets the idea to go to bed. This should only last a few days with an occasional reminder. This is the hard part, but stand firm.

You should start feeding your puppy in his safe room or kennel. This will help him to learn that this is his own private space. You can leave play toys for him to play with during the day. If he tries to play with his potty pads, use your squirt bottle again with your negative marker to teach him that is not acceptable. As soon as he quits, praise him. Just as you should praise him every time he does something acceptable to you.



NEXT:

After awhile, you can remove the pads closest to the puppy's bed. If he walks over the floor to his pads to potty than he is learning and you can eventually get down to one pad in his safe room. What if he potties on the floor? Go back a step and give him some more time to learn to use his pads. Be sure that he poops and pees on these pads. Remember they don't realize they are both potties. Whenever you have your puppy out of his safe room, keep a potty pad near him to minimize accidents. He should seek out the pad rather than the floor. Later you can move the pads closer and closer to the door or take your pup outside to a special place to potty as he gets older or the weather warms up.

Training your young puppy to use potty pads is not teaching him to potty in the den. The house is too big for him now, but in time he will learn that the whole house is the den. Also keep in mind that for my smaller cousins, it may take them a lot longer to realize you have a huge den because even full grown a 2 yr old child looks intimidating to them. Remember to use that cue word so when you transition your canine friend to potty outdoors he will grasp the idea faster. And only let your dog roam the whole den when they are trustworthy enough.

Till we wag tails again.

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