

# Toilet Training Your Puppy

Limerick Vet  
City Vet  
Donal Ryan MVB MRCVS  
12 Lord Edward Street  
Limerick

## *It's So Frustrating!*

Poor success with toilet training is the greatest source of frustration for owners of a new puppy. This reduces the enjoyment of and your relationship with the puppy. It may also become confused and distressed, making training even more difficult.

### **Scent Marks**

At about 8 weeks, the puppy begins to use predictable locations for urination and defaecation, sniffing the ground for scent marks first. This is when house training should begin in earnest. The owner must ensure scent marks are left in the chosen toilet area by bringing the puppy there when it is most likely to go to the toilet. If the puppy goes to the toilet indoors clean it up as soon as possible to reduce the scent marking. **Do not** punish it when this happens, this confuses the puppy, can be cruel, and is unhelpful.

### **Aims of Toilet Training**

The objective is to ensure the new puppy does not soil in the house, but goes to the toilet outside, preferably in a special toilet area. Many people train the puppy to use newspaper in the house with the hope that it can be retrained to go outside later. This is not advisable as the scent marks that attract a puppy to go to the toilet are indoors.

### **A Proper Diet Helps**

Tinned dog food increases the volume of stool. Feeding *Hills' Science Plan Puppy* makes toilet training more manageable, it halves the volume of stool passed and it is formed and easier to clean up. Feed the puppy 3-4 times daily, and bring it to the toilet area immediately afterwards.

### **A Successful Routine**

Setting up and sticking to a strict routine increases the chances of success. Confine the puppy to a small area at night with just enough room for it to sleep comfortably. Most puppies will not soil their own beds, but will hold on until they are brought to the toilet area first thing in the morning. Every time the puppy goes to the toilet in the right place, reward it by praising it.

The puppy should be brought to the toilet area hourly throughout the day. Confining it to this area by temporarily fencing it off ensures the puppy will only soil within this area, and as a result it is the only place scent marks can be found, making the training easier. Setting a timer as a reminder is advisable, especially for the first week or so. Once the training begins to be successful these intervals can be

increased.

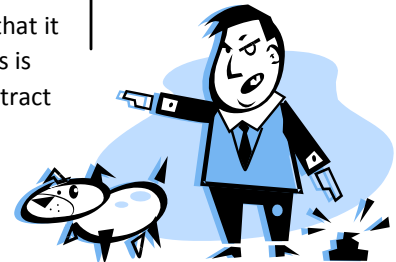
Finally, remove food and water from 6 p.m., and continue to bring it to the toilet area until your bedtime, to ensure its bowel and bladder are empty overnight.

The stool will need to be removed from the toilet area daily.

Your dog should never be allowed to defaecate in public area, and if it does you should remove the stool and dispose of it safely and properly.

### **IMPORTANT POINTS**

- *Be patient with your puppy and praise it when it does the right thing.*
- *Ideally train the puppy to use a specially chosen toilet area outside.*



- *Do not punish your puppy when it makes a mistake, this is unhelpful and distressing for the puppy.*
- *Following a strict routine from the outset makes it easier for your puppy to understand what you want it to do.*
- *As time goes on you help the puppy to develop good toilet habits.*
- *A proper diet and good eating habits make toilet training easier.*
- *Wet and cold weather will make toilet training more difficult.*
- *Clean up your puppy's stool from the toilet area daily.*