Prepare Your Puppy to Potty Outside

Checklist of items needed before you can begin:

- Dog Kennel or Crate (sized for your dog)
- Space Reducer (i.e., beach cooler)
- Loud Bell
- Dog Treats
- Leash
- Collar
- Carpet Shampoo and/or Stain Remover
- Dog Urine Scent Removing Cleaner
- Dog Toys

1. Purchase a Dog Kennel or Crate. The most important thing to remember when purchasing your puppy a crate or kennel, is to make sure it is the appropriate size for your dog. This means it is not too big and it is not too small. Your dog needs to be able to turn around in the crate/kennel but not move around as if in a small room. The reason for this is the animals will not expel their bowels or bladder in the area they live in. Too big of a crate/kennel, and you are giving the pup a place to void and then move away from. For dogs that will grow to become medium to large, purchase a bigger crate/kennel and then place a space reducer in one part of the area so that it is not accessible. I use a beach cooler for a space reducer as it is an item we already have at our home and I can easily rinse it off outside in the hose if need be.

   **What type of crate/kennel you choose is completely up to you and what you are comfortable with using in your home. Check out some pictures of crates that I think work really well or that I found really cool!**

2. Set up a loud bell on your door handle or right next to the door you plan to use to exit your home to allow puppy to potty. Each time you exit your home with the puppy to go potty, simply ring the bell and then love on your puppy so he or she begins to understand that by ringing the bell, you get to go outside to play or potty and lots of loving attention from your owner. This will help the puppy later on. The puppy will learn to bump and ring the bell to go outside and you will have an easy cue to let you know when the puppy needs to go.

3. The key to ensuring your pup does not potty in your home is to keep him/her in the crate at all times the first week or so. The only time the pup should be out, is if you are outside with him/her or when the puppy first comes inside from going potty. If you allow the puppy to stay out of the crate/kennel for long periods of time, you can bet you will be spending a lot of time cleaning your carpet.

4. While I say in step 3 that it is key to keep your puppy in their crate/kennel a majority of the time, I want to stress the importance of spending a lot of play time with your new friend. As with a toddler child, a puppy wants all of your attention. I recommend placing the crate in an area of your home where the puppy can be a part of the family and will not be forgotten about.

5. If you want to get the puppy out for family play time, simply pick the puppy up out of the kennel and do not sit him/her down until you are outside. If the puppy is allowed to walk in the home without going outside first, you will more than likely have an accident to clean up. You will only need to do this for the first week. After that, you should be able to start letting the puppy walk freely to the door to go outside. At this point, help the puppy ring the bell on his own. Either with his/her paw or nose.

6. If accidents on the carpet do occur, simply clean the carpet and use a dog urine scent removing cleaner as well. Animals will go to the same place to use the restroom. This is because they can smell their own byproducts and
associate the area with a restroom. If you remove the scent, then you remove their ability to find the same place they last used.

7. **DO NOT EVER HIT OR SPANK YOUR PUPPY.** One thing to remember here is that if the puppy has an accident, it is almost always the owners fault. Now, I know that dogs can become stubborn and angry as they age and I have heard people say that their dog will use the restroom on something in the house because they were mad. I don’t know how much I believe or do not believe this. But I do know that we are talking about our DOGS when telling stories of anger and stubbornness. I am discussing puppies. There is a difference.

8. If you spend a lot of time with your puppy, then you will begin to notice the signs they put off when they have to go potty. Until the bell becomes a consistent tool, make sure to watch for those signs. I have listed a few below that I have experienced with the puppies I have trained:
   a. Sniffing around as if looking for something
   b. Whining and watching everything you do
   c. Prancing or restlessnes on their feet
   d. Pawing at the kennel door or the front door
   e. Staring directly at the owner with moving (I call this their attempts at telepathic communication)

9. Each time your puppy goes potty outside, give that sweetheart a doggie treat. They earned it. After all, don’t we give our toddler applause and stickers when they go potty in the toilet? Another great time to give your doggie a treat is when you put him/her back in their crate/kennel. This helps the puppy begin to realize that the crate/kennel is not a punishment but instead is their own personal space.

10. Over time, you will begin to see the puppy holding their bladder for longer and longer. As you see this, start allowing the puppy more time out in the house. Just remember to do this in small increments. I recommend starting with 10-15 minutes and work your way up in 5 minute increments to avoid those pesky accidents.

If you think of your puppy as a toddler and treat him/her as you would a child, you will begin to see the similarities between the two. We would never punish our toddler for an accident if we didn’t provide them a restroom to go to, so we should not punish our puppy for an accident if we didn’t get them outside like we should have.

Over the years, I have heard many people say that they believe keeping your dog in a crate is mean. It’s because of this statement that I am choosing to include a video released by [www.humanesociety.org](http://www.humanesociety.org). To view the video, you can go directly to their website at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQYoMrcNMl0&feature=player_embedded#t=35](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQYoMrcNMl0&feature=player_embedded#t=35).

I highly recommend this video if you too are uncomfortable with using the crate method to train your puppy. This video will even discuss the option of setting up a larger play pen in your home for when your puppy will be in his personal space for longer periods of time. After all, we can’t rely on their bladders to last for longer than a couple of hours until they are at least a year old.