

Housebreaking Hints

You probably didn't know that relieving in harness can be a reason that your puppies will not succeed in our program. Most likely it never even occurred to you how embarrassing and very frustrating it is for a graduate to have a wonderful working dog that has accidents in harness.

We would like to offer you some tips and guidelines that you can follow to help your puppy achieve its destiny.



General Guidelines

Your puppy does not know where the pup is expected to eliminate. Watch for signals i.e. circling, sniffing, tail slightly raised and say "out?" Bring outside to park time area you have chosen and patiently give time for pup to eliminate. When elimination happens, praise, praise, and praise.

Limit the area of freedom inside the home until the pup is housebroken and then gradually expand.

Pup needs to go out after sleeping, after playing, after eating.

If you take pup out and elimination does not happen after a realistic period of time, return inside and either crate or keep pup next to you on leash. Try again in a few minutes. Once pup relieves outside, pup can have freedom once back inside the home.

Schedule and supervise! If your puppy is on a consistent schedule for park time and you stick to it, you should be able to get the pup housebroken in no time at all.

Don't expect your puppy to let you know when they need to eliminate. Try to anticipate – that way you'll never be disappointed.

Always take your puppy to an open area where there are no trees or bushes.

Once pup has gotten the idea to go out, plant your feet in a place where you will be standing and let your puppy walk around you on leash to empty. (You may want to use a hula hoop for a very young puppy; you stand inside and let them circle outside.)

When your puppy matures and develops its park time skills, you should begin to teach the park time routine it will be using with a graduate. Take a step or two forward and back to keep the puppy moving.

Try to find as many different surfaces for your puppy to empty on as possible.

Once pup has eliminated outside on leash, you may allow some playtime to tire him out. Once playtime is finished, offer to eliminate again before going back inside.

When you catch the puppy in the act of urinating or defecating in the house, try to interrupt and get the pup out quickly to finish outside with lots of praise.

Feed your puppy's last meal between 4:00 and 5:00 PM, if possible. No water after 7:00PM.

Leave water down from breakfast to around 7PM for pup to learn to monitor water intake or initially offer several small bowls of water during the day.

Use the words PARK TIME as the puppy is eliminating.

Praise, Praise and Praise once the puppy has eliminated.

Once your puppy is parking regularly, touch your puppy gently on its back during eliminating so that it knows it is okay to be touched. Just gentle strokes down its back once in awhile.

Always take your puppy out ON LEASH for Park Time.

On Neighborhood Walks

Relieve your puppy before you start out on your walk.

Initially very short walks and then back to park time spot in yard.

Gently correct your puppy for trying to relieve on route and take to an area where it is okay.

If your puppy is expressing a desire to go on route, have your puppy sit every few steps to encourage it to use its "holding it" muscles while heading back home or to a place where it is okay to eliminate.

Make it home if possible before letting the puppy finish up.

If the puppy always eliminates after twenty minutes of walking, walk out ten minutes and then back ten minutes.

Gradually increase the length of time pup is asked to go before relieving. Teach the puppy that it is never okay to relieve on route.

A year-old dog should only need to relieve four to five times a day. Unless there is a physical problem, don't let your puppy try to convince you otherwise.

On Outings

When your puppy is very young, plan outings that are short and non-stressful and close to home.

Depending on the age of your pup, do not relieve the puppy at home before the outing.

Try to relieve your puppy before entering the destination. If pup does not relieve take a little break in the car and try again.

Once pup has relieved, go into the outing for about ten minutes, and then take the puppy back to the car.

Drive home, and give pup another chance to relieve. This teaches the puppy to relieve away from home with distractions.

As your puppy gets older lengthen the amount of time on your outings.

Once your puppy is fairly successful, it's time to start taking it on errands and along for more of your everyday routines.

If you have your puppy at work all day, establish a "home base" at work.

If your puppy starts to relieve while the vest is on DO NOT make a big deal about it, but do gently interrupt the process with a mild correction. Help the dog make it to an appropriate relieving area by asking it to sit periodically until you can get there.

If possible try to not let your puppy wander or walk while it is eliminating, this can be very difficult for a blind person to be able to clean up. If pup does wander, please let your area coordinator know.

We hope these tips will be helpful to you. Remember your responsibility is to teach your puppy to relieve comfortably on command on ALL surfaces.

If you are experiencing any problems or have any questions or concerns please call your Area Coordinator.

Thank you for all you do for the puppy raising program.