



# HOUSE TRAINING THAT WORKS

There are a lot of ways to house training a dog; the problem is that most of them don't work reliably. Some even cause other problems to develop. To house training your dog, you need to know some things about dog psychology.

First, dogs don't think of elimination - urine and poop - the way we do. You've probably noticed how interested they are in a spot where they or other dogs have eliminated. Dogs can smell zillions of times better than we can; and they get information in urine or poop smell that includes age, sex, state of health, state of mind, and much more. You may know that dogs can smell seizures before they happen - there are many trained seizure dogs who keep their epileptic or seizure-prone owners safer - and can even smell cancer before any lab test can detect it (if you have a mole or spot that your dog seems VERY interested in, ask your doctor to check it out). To a dog, urine or poop is a way of leaving a note to a friend. We have to teach them where it's appropriate to leave their "notes" as we all learn to mail our letters and not put them in the oven or under a rock.

Methods such as rubbing a dog's nose in his elimination, putting vinegar in his mouth, or spanking him may only make him hide where he eliminates. Do you really want your dog to go in the far end of the closet, behind the washing machine, or under the bed? It can also cause him to become aggressive toward people or animals of lower status - children, smaller or older pets - or to become so withdrawn and fearful he doesn't want to be around you and forgets how to play.

So here's the method. It may seem troublesome when you read about it, but it's faster than other methods, it won't cause other misbehaviors or personality changes in your dog, and it actually works. I think you'll find it's not so hard to do once you get into it.

First, clean any spots where your dog or another animal has eliminated. Be sure to use a cleaner with special enzymes to remove the smell; ordinary cleaners won't do it. They may make the spot smell clean to you, but not to your dog. Then put a very small dish with 5 or 6 pieces of dry dog food right on the spot. When it's empty refill it, for at least a month. If there are many, many spots, use something like jar lids with 2 or 3 pieces of food on most of them.

Now, when you or any responsible adult is home with the dog, put the dog on a leash. Put the loop of the leash on a belt and wear the belt. The dog is attached to you. Sometimes this method is called the Umbilical Cord Method; you can see why.

Now, just go about your normal activities; but wherever you go the dog is with you, attached to you by the leash. Talk to him - it doesn't have to be anything special, you can talk about the stupid stuff they have on TV or what you're going to have for dinner or if that shirt really got clean - but do it aloud. This increases the bond between you and also helps his brain to develop more fully and faster. This is absolutely no extra work for you.



When you're asleep or gone or in the shower or something, the dog should be in his kennel. If he doesn't have a kennel, go to WalMart and buy one. It should be big enough for him to lie down comfortably, but not much bigger; and it's his bedroom. Put a cushion in it, or a soft folded towel, and maybe a toy or two.

Since he's attached to you, you'll be able to notice when he looks like he needs to potty. Take him out immediately – still on the leash attached to you – and when he eliminates outside, reward him with a small tasty treat that he doesn't get any other time and really likes. Keep a supply near the door.

If you'll say a special word when he's in position to poop or urinate, in a month or so you can take him out and say the word and not have to wait for him to make up his mind. The word will become a command. Be sure to reward him for obeying!

What if you're just not thinking or noticing and he poops or urinates in the house again? Get a paper towel or plastic bag, scoop up a bit of the poop or soak up a bit of the urine - and look worried while you're doing it. Talk to him in a worried voice. Take it and him – because he's still on the leash, isn't he? – outside and put it on the ground where you want him to go. Now sound and look happy. Praise him and give him a treat, as if he had done it there. Take him back in and remember to be more watchful.

Along the way, notice your dog's elimination schedule. Always take him out first thing in the morning, last thing at night, and after every meal. If you notice other times when he seems to always need to go, take advantage of his schedule and take him out at those times. Remember that if he is eliminating in the house when he doesn't usually do that, he probably needs to go to the vet. Remember to always take him out, never let him out; that's how dogs get stolen or killed.

How long will it take to work? In a young dog, not long at all. In a puppy, a little longer than if he were 4 or 5 months old – the brain development thing. In a dog who's been eliminating in the house for a while, longer than that. However, if you work at it consistently, any dog should be house trained within a month. One of my own dogs was house trained in one day. If you aren't seeing definite improvement – if not complete success – in 10 days, contact me.

Remember that dogs can only be relied on to hold their urine or feces one hour for every month old they are, until 8 hours at 8 months old. Never expect a dog to hold it longer than 8 hours, and remember that sick or older dogs won't be able to hold it as long as healthy young adult dogs.

If you have any questions or problems with this method, please email me at [guarrj2002@yahoo.com](mailto:guarrj2002@yahoo.com). I'm always happy to help good dog owners.