

Beggin to Behave Dog Training

Sandy Strychor, ABCD7

Crate Training 101

Why is a crate an important training tool?

- 1) It keeps doggie safe when you aren't able to keep an eye on him.
- 2) It keeps your house safe when you aren't able to keep an eye on him.
- 3) It is a 'safe place' for your dog when the world gets scary (like thunderstorms, fireworks, and when too many people are visiting and your dog feels overwhelmed).
- 4) Being den animals, it gives a space that is their own, and they feel secure there.

The crate should always be a happy place. Never use it for punishment.

The crate should be large enough for your dog to fully stand and to turn around in.

Keep it a happy and pleasant place to be...put special toys in the crate. Place an article of unwashed clothing you have worn inside the crate. The scent can comfort your dog. Give your dog extra yummy treats in his crate, like a Kong filled with small treats and topped off with some peanut butter. You can mix equal parts peanut butter and yogurt and freeze it. It will take quite a while to get it out of there and your dog will be busy for a long time while you are gone. No time to worry about where you are and when you will be back.

Put the crate somewhere you spend a lot of time together, like the living room or kitchen. You don't want it somewhere he never goes except when you are gone because it will be scary. Don't use the basement or laundry room. If your dog can't tell what's going on in the house, he will be afraid and he won't want to be in the crate.

Play music like Through a Dog's Ear. It will help to keep your dog calm. Or put on the radio or T.V. to keep your dog company.

Use an Adaptil (once called Comfort Zone) Plugin or a D.A.P. Diffuser. D.A.P., or Dog Appeasing Pheromone, mimics the pheromones of the nursing mother dog. Scientific studies have shown it is not only effective in reducing stress in dogs but it also increases positive interactions.

Crates can be partly covered with a blanket or sheet to make it more safe and secure feeling for your dog. You can also put in a comfy pillow or a T-shirt you have worn that has your scent on it.

Do not go into your dog's crate and do not let children go in. This is 'his' place.

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If your dog is new to the crate- start out by leaving the door open and let him find good things in there. Then after a few tries, close the door for a few minutes and let him come out. Increase the amount of time. Eventually you can leave the room for longer and longer times. Then leave the house. Increase the time you are out of sight. Look and listen to what your dog is doing while he can't see you. Is he calm or afraid? If he is afraid- you have moved to fast. Back up a step or two until you find his comfort level and more ahead more slowly.

If you put a water bowl in the crate, you are more likely to have a spill or an accident before you get home if you are gone a long time. Puppies should not be crated for very long days until they are old enough to 'hold it'.

When you are ready to leave your dog put him in his crate. Do not talk to him afterwards or make eye contact. Just go. When you return, again do not talk or make eye contact. Open the door and let your dog out of the crate. You may want to let him outside to potty. Now, greet him and pet him. If you do talk and make eye contact, you will get your dog wound up and excited. It will be very hard for him to wait for your return in this state and he may whine, cry, chew the crate or soil it.

Through a Dog's Ear: <http://throughadogsear.com/>

Adaptil: <http://www.makinghappierpets.com/dog-behaviors/>

Kongs for Dogs: <http://www.kongcompany.com/>

