

Kennel Club Good Citizens Puppy Foundation

Crate Training Guidelines

Crate Training your Puppy

Some dogs love having their own 'four poster beds' and many puppy owners find these useful for containing the puppy and keeping it safe and out of trouble when it is alone, rather like putting a baby in a cot or play pen.

If your puppy has been home reared it may already be used to sleeping in a crate.

What size crate do I need?

When ordering a crate for your puppy, buy one big enough for it to lie in stretched out and standing up in when it is fully grown. Make sure that the mesh is not too big as puppies may get their mouths caught.

House rules!

The crate is your puppy's sanctuary, his calm haven in the whirlwind that is modern living. He needs to feel happy and relaxed while in his crate, so ensure that everybody knows, and sticks to, the house rule; **NOBODY DISTURBS THE PUPPY WHILE IT IS IN ITS CRATE.**

Getting puppy used to the crate

Now that you have your crate, you want your puppy to enjoy going in there.

- Put some bedding inside and tie some toys in the far end of the crate so the puppy has to go in there to play with them.
- Gently place your puppy in there whenever it falls asleep.
- Leave occasional treats in the crate for the puppy to find, so the puppy learns to love going in there.
- Do not shut the door until your puppy is comfortable being in there, and start closing the door when you are feeding it and when it has fallen asleep. Make sure you stay around to let it out the moment it wakes up or finishes its meal.
- You can gradually increase the time the puppy stays in the crate, and initially this should be whilst you are in the room with it.

Keeping a clean bed

Make sure your puppy has recently emptied its bladder and bowels before it enters the crate and do not leave it in the crate or puppy pen for more than a couple of hours during the daytime. Although most puppies are content to sleep in their crate overnight, they get very distressed if they have to foul near their beds, so you must be prepared to get out of your bed to let them out if they need to toilet during the night. If they have fouled inside the crate, you must clean it out immediately or the puppy will hate being in the crate.

A crate is a happy place!

Never use the crate as a sin-bin or you will teach your puppy to resent it. Always remove the puppy's collar when in the crate in case it gets caught up on it.