



## Crate Training Your Dog

If you train your dog to be content in a crate, you'll provide a safe, cozy place that she can call her own and sleep in at night. It also gives you a safe way to transport your dog and travel with her to motels, to friends' homes, when on vacation, etc. Crates are especially helpful when introducing a new dog into your household. You can also use a crate to efficiently house train your dog and prevent her from being destructive.

### Using a Crate to House Train Your Dog

Dogs don't like to soil their sleeping areas, so your dog will naturally avoid eliminating in her crate. If used for house training purposes, the crate should be sized so that your dog can lie down comfortably, stand up without having to crouch and easily turn around in a circle.

Using a crate will help you predict when your dog needs to eliminate and control where she eliminates. If she's been crated overnight or for a few hours during the day, the chances are extremely high that she'll eliminate as soon as you release her from the crate and take her outside. So, with the crate's help, you can prevent your dog from eliminating indoors and have a chance to reward her for going in the right place—outside.

### Using a Crate to Prevent Destructive Behavior

To teach your dog not to do things you don't like, you must be able to observe and monitor her behavior. Confining her in a crate can prevent unwanted behavior when you can't supervise her or have to leave her home alone.

### How Long to Crate Your Dog

At night when dogs sleep, their body systems and elimination slow down. This is why they can go all night without eliminating once they're old enough to have sufficient bladder and bowel control. But during the day, neither puppies nor adult dogs should be crated for more than four or five hours at a time.

#### Puppy Age- Maximum time in crate

8–10 weeks 30–60 minutes

11–14 weeks 1–3 hours

15–16 weeks 3–4 hours

17+ weeks 4–5 hours

If you're using the crate for house training, remember that it's a temporary tool. Your goal is to create a dog who can be trusted to have freedom in at least part of your house while you're gone.

### When NOT to Use a Crate

Dogs who suffer from separation anxiety should not be confined in a crate.

Some signs of Separation Anxiety include:

- Destructiveness, vocalizing or house soiling during the first 30 minutes after you leave your dog alone in the house
- Destructive behaviors that consistently occur only when she's left by herself in the house
- Destructive behavior directed at windows, doors, flooring in front of doors or items with your scent, like seat cushions or the TV remote

Some dogs don't tolerate crating well due to other types of fears or anxieties, like thunder phobia. Don't crate your dog if you see any of the following:

- Damage to the crate from your dog's attempts to escape
- Damage to surrounding objects that she's been able to reach while inside the crate
- Wet chest fur or a lot of wetness in the bottom of the crate from drooling
- Urination or defecation in the crate
- Your dog moves the crate while she's inside
- Excessive barking or howling during your absence (You can get reports from neighbors or record your dog's behavior using a video camera.)