



UVHS Behavior Tips

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Crate Training

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Giving your puppy/dog a crate as his home (den) for his life is a great kindness. The crate will become his safe haven. No matter where the crate is placed it is his home. If you travel, your dog will be safe and at ease at friends, in a motel, while being kenneled.

Crate training is the best solution for managing house breaking and chewing for puppies. It is the time-out location where children may not bother the dog. The crate allows you to restrict without punishing, but only if you positively train your puppy or adult dog to it's benefits.

Teaching the puppy that the kennel is home:

1. Feed your puppy in the crate with the door hooked open. As you put the food down say the dog's name, and "Crate".
2. Toss toys or food into the crate when playing. Door is hooked open.
3. Hide bits of food in crate when puppy or dog isn't looking so they go into crate to check for "good" things. Use the crate as the dog's toy box so he'll go to the crate to find his toys.
4. After exercise put a **special food treat*** in the crate with the puppy and lock the crate while you work in the same room. Release puppy after a 5-10 minutes or when it wakes up. Never release if it is crying. Be sure that you crate your dog for varying lengths of time when you are at home. While you watch TV or are making supper or working at the computer - put your puppy in the crate so he learns that you aren't always leaving when he is crated.
5. Crate the puppy with a **special food treat*** whenever you leave him alone in the house, make sure you leave the radio on. Be very matter of fact. Always use the same phrase whenever you leave. Something like "In your crate now, I'll be back soon". And then leave house for a few minutes at a time to start. Work up to a 1/2 hour. It is very important to vary the length of time you are gone. By changing the length of time you are gone from 5 minutes to 30 minutes to 10 minutes and so forth you will help the puppy to not worry about how long you will be gone. When you come back in, take 5 minutes to change your clothes, etc. and then release puppy from crate ONLY if he is being quiet. Then go outside with puppy, put on his long line and let him do all his bathroom business before playing.
6. Never leave your dog alone in the house unless he's crated. You will have little trouble housebreaking or preventing chewing if your puppy is either always in your sight (and mind) or in his crate. When your puppy is between 6 - 10 months old you can now start leaving the crate door open for short periods of time when you are at home or at night. Slowly begin leaving your puppy with the crate door open for longer periods of time. If chewing behavior starts up, drop back to leaving the puppy locked in the crate. Begin again with short periods of open door crate time. And again leave him crated for different lengths of time – varying between short and long periods of time.

- **Special food treat:** Use a marrow bone that is very strong about 3"- 4" long (you can buy these at a good pet store). Stand it on end in plastic dish, fill it with nonfat yogurt and freeze it. Give it to your puppy or dog while in their crate when you leave. It will occupy, distract and clean their teeth all at once. Also you can refill it and freeze it again.

Special Note: *If your puppy needs to be crated and is having trouble settling down and can't stop fussing or crying, then place a towel over the front door of the crate. This will be a cue for your puppy that when the towel is there, he will remain in the crate. Never lift the towel off and release the puppy from the crate unless he is calm and quiet. Putting the towel on at night is a great way to say lights out.*