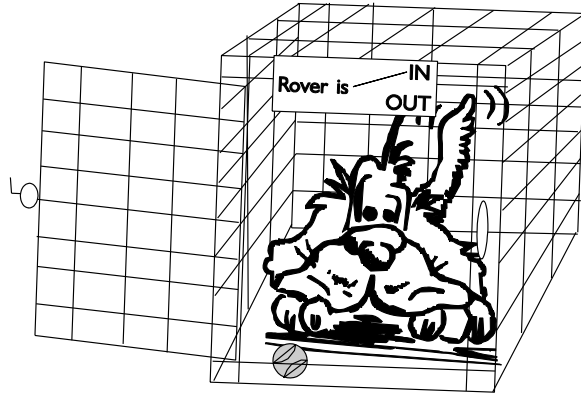


A Room of His Own

Crates are the cribs and playpens of dog training. A crate helps to prevent your dog from chewing and soiling the house. Crates protect dogs from consuming things in the house that could be harmful to *him*. A crate also calms anxious dogs and teaches hyperactive dogs to sleep when left alone. In addition, the crate becomes a home away from home whenever you are traveling with your dog.

If the crate is used correctly, your dog will regard it as a “room of his own.” It is a clean, comfortable, safe place to leave your dog when he cannot be supervised. Most dogs will try not to urinate or defecate in the crate, which is why it is so invaluable for housebreaking.



To introduce your dog to the crate, place the crate in a “people” area such as the kitchen or family room. Use an old towel or blanket for bedding. Put your dog’s toys and a few treats in the open crate and allow your dog to come and go as he wishes. At mealtimes, feed your dog in the crate with the door closed. (Clean up any spills promptly—it’s very important for the crate to stay clean!) Your dog doesn’t need to stay in his crate long, but should get comfortable eating his meal there.

Put your dog in the crate when he is tired and ready for a nap. As soon as you hear him start to wake up, go to him and take him outside. Do NOT let him out if he is barking or whining because this will reward him for being noisy. Let your dog sleep in the crate at night. If he wakes you during the night, go to him and take him out. You want him to believe that you will meet his bathroom needs. However, you should return him to the crate to sleep the remainder of the night.

When training is complete, how long can your dog be left? For young puppies, use this rule of thumb. The time limit should be your puppy’s age in months plus one. For example, a three-month-old pup should not be crated for more than four hours. A four-month-old pup’s limit is five hours. The self control of puppies varies, but most can usually hold it overnight by the age of four months. The adult dog’s self-control is usually great enough that it can be left for eight to nine hours in the crate. But keep in mind that long confinements are likely to present other mental and physical difficulties. Crate or no crate, any dog consistently denied the companionship it needs is going to be a lonely pet and may still find ways—destructive ways—to express anxiety, depression, and stress.

A dog crate offers many advantages for you and your dog—the most important being peace of mind when leaving your dog home alone. You’ll know that nothing can be soiled or destroyed, and you’ll know that your dog won’t get into anything harmful while you’re gone.

Dog Trainers Workshop

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