

Avoiding house soiling by dogs

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Housetraining is based on rewarding good behaviour. There are also some practical steps that will help your dog not to soil your house.

Food and water

- Feed your dog meals rather than leaving food out at all times; then bowel movements can be predicted.
- Your dog should defecate 5–20 minutes after eating.
- If the problem is urination, *and there are no medical problems*:
 - Remove the water bowl 30 minutes after your dog has eaten
 - Offer water after walks, play periods, or when your dog is panting.

Preventive measures

- For the first 2 weeks, keep your dog tethered to you or to a nearby piece of furniture, or in a crate, so that he/she does not have a chance to eliminate (go to the toilet) in the house.
- Try to observe your dog so that you learn the signals that mean he/she has a full bladder or bowel (for example, circling, sniffing, staring at you).
- At night, or when you are away, your dog should be confined but *not left for more than 6 hours* without the opportunity to eliminate (go to the toilet).

Rewarding elimination outside

- Take your dog outside for 5 minutes every 2 hours.
- If the dog eliminates (goes to the toilet), praise *while* he/she is urinating or defecating. Give a very small but delicious food treat immediately afterwards as a reward.
- If your dog has not soiled the house during the 2 weeks, you can extend the time between trips outside to 3 hours during the day and 7 hours at night.

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Diary

- Keep a diary of each elimination (urine or faeces) and where it occurred.
 - That will help the veterinary surgeon to monitor progress and will help you be aware of your dog's biological needs and individual preferences.
- !** The most important thing to remember about housetraining is to reward the appropriate behaviour.
- !** Punish your dog only if you catch him/her actually urinating or defecating in the house, and even then you should simply startle him/her so that he/she stops eliminating (going to the toilet). Take your dog outside immediately and praise elimination (going to the toilet) there.