



The Mannerly Dog

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Training Tip Sheet: Houstraining Your New Adult Dog

Whether you want your dog to use a potty pad indoors or potty outside on the grass, he must learn the difference between the surface you want him to use and any other surface or location. We do this by simply controlling his choices and rewarding the ones we like. Start this process the moment you bring your new adult dog home, even if the shelter or previous owner said he is houstrained. Your home is a new place and we can't be sure just how well he was trained in his previous home.

What does "Controlling and Rewarding Choices" look like?

1. Every time the dog urinates or defecates in the right place, he gets a treat.
2. Give the treat so the dog relates it directly to the act of peeing or pooping.
 - a. Timing: give the treat just as the dog is finishing up his potty business; just as he is raising his body back up from peeing or pooping.
 - b. Location: Have the dog on a leash so that you're right next to him, ready to pop the treat in his mouth, whether he using grass outside or a potty pad. Yes, a leash in the house! This insures that you can control where the dog uses the bathroom. If he's not on a leash, you'll take him to the potty pad but he can move off of it to actually do his business, and then he's learning to potty where you don't want him to.
3. Don't add any other behaviors to the houstraining process. Don't ask your dog to sit or come to you; he gets the treat simply for doing his potty business where you want him to, and immediately as he's finishing the process.
4. Whenever your new dog is not doing her business outside or on her potty pad, she is either on a leash or in a crate or kennel.
 - a. When you're home with her, keep your new dog on a leash and with you at all times. If she's with you and not wandering off to explore the house, you will notice the signs of her needing to eliminate. She won't be peeing or pooping on the carpet. Drop the leash and let it drag while you're playing with your dog.
 - b. When you're not home, put your dog in his crate or kennel, having already worked to create an association for him that the crate is a pleasant resting place, and making sure he's peed and pooped before you leave.
 - c. Take your new dog to the assigned potty area (outside or potty pad) every hour when you first arrive home with her. You will become accustomed to when and how often she is likely to need to go, and what her behavior looks like when she needs to go. As you progress with houstraining, you can adjust the schedule to her needs: before and after eating, playing and sleeping are usually necessary.
 - d. Feed your dog on a schedule, twice a day; then he is likely to be on a potty schedule, too.
 - e. Do not limit your dog's water availability for the purpose of houstraining, except that you don't need to leave water available for him while he's asleep at night. Dogs must have water available all day.