

Crate Training

There are many benefits to teaching your dog to use a crate as their 'safe haven'.

Crate training can:

- Help with toilet training
- Provide safety for you and your dog while travelling
- Provide a safe area for your dog if you are unable to hold or supervise your dog
- Enable your dog to be a part of your family while inside
- Help with future hospital stays or boarding
- Help to minimise destruction

A crate is a secure place for your dog to relax and rest in and can provide more opportunities for your dog to be a part of your family both at home and on family outings or on holidays.

Crate type, size and location:

The crate you choose needs to be big enough for your dog to comfortably stand up, turn around in and lay stretched out on their side. Crates are available in plastic, hard wire or soft fabric/mesh. It is best to start with a hard plastic or wire crate so your dog is not able to scratch or chew out of the crate.



Once your dog is crate training you could graduate them up to a soft fabric/mesh crate.



The crate should be placed in the room or area where your family spends most of their time, e.g. the living room, kitchen or dining room.

Steps to crate training:

1. Select the appropriate sized crate for your dog and place some comfortable bedding in it.
2. Start by setting up the crate in one chosen location and leaving the door open. For the first few days leave the dog to explore and sniff the crate and just let him get used to the crate being there.
3. Start to place treats inside the door of the crate and let your dog take these as they please. Calmly praise your dog for visiting the crate.
4. Still leaving the door open at all times, start to feed your dog breakfast or dinner in the crate.
5. Once your dog is comfortable and happy being in the crate encourage them to spend longer periods of time in there by placing a toy stuffed with food or a rawhide chew in the crate.
6. Once your dog is happy to stay in the crate for a short time, shut the door while they are chewing or eating and then open it again before they are finished.
7. Start to leave the door shut for a slightly longer period each time your dog goes inside the crate and remember to offer calm praise when they are in the crate.
8. If your dog is comfortable being in the crate you can shut them in the crate overnight when they would normally be asleep. Make sure you can hear when your dog stirs or wakes up and needs to toilet so you can let them out.
9. When your dog is comfortable being inside the crate to eat or sleep the door can be shut when they need to be confined. When confinement is not required the crate should be left open for the dog to come and go as they please.

Crate training tips:

- Place soft bedding in the crate
- Place some of your dogs favourite toys in the crate
- Let your dog sleep in the crate overnight
- Never send your dog to the crate as punishment
- Do not place your dog in the crate all day
- It is important to let your dog out of the crate when they are quiet and before they become stressed
- Let your dog out of their crate to toilet
- Ignore any minor whining
- Place a 'cue' on your dog going into their crate, e.g. "Go to bed"
- Only leave your dog in the crate unsupervised when they are completely comfortable and at ease with the door shut

