

Toilet training

Yes, you can toilet train your dog no matter how young or how old she is.

The truth is your dog really doesn't know where it's appropriate to eliminate and where it is not. Dogs only have two criteria for where they relieve themselves.

- 1.) It must not be near their food or sleeping place.
- 2.) It should be absorbent.

That means grass is a good bet. But your carpet and rugs also fit the bill. Now the question. How do we show the dog which place is our first choice for her toilet?

Begin by eliminating any chance your dog will eliminate in the house. (By the way-using wee pads: Not a good choice as this will only teach pup to go to the toilet in your hosue)

To achieve that you will have to make sure your dog is always interacting with you (supervise, supervise, supervise) or safely confined. The one question you should never have to ask yourself is "where is the dog?" This is called error-less toilet training. There is now no chance your dog can make a mistake - unless you do.

At the same time, show your dog that eliminating outdoors is an excellent choice. As soon as your dog has completed urinating or defecating, give her three delicious treats one after the other. You are now showing her that she can trade in her urine and faeces for treats! Do it right on the spot. Don't wait for her to come back in. Rewarding her once she is inside is just that- REWARDING HER FOR BEING INSIDE!

If you'd like to show your dog exactly where she is to eliminate, take her to that spot on her lead. As soon as she's done, give her a reward. *NOTE: Your reward should be something she does not normally get inside for normal training. Toilet treats should be special and only given when she toilets outside.

It's important that you never punish your dog for eliminating. Mistakes you catch should be handled by calmly but quickly taking your dog outdoors to her potty spot. Punishing or even yelling will encourage her not to potty in front of you. It won't teach her anything about indoors versus outdoors. Missed mistakes are just that. They are ancient history. Let it go. Do a better job of supervising or confining next time.

If you are potty training a puppy, take her out every hour. Older puppies can only physically hold it about an hour for every month in age they are (4 month old puppy = 4 to 5 hours maximum). Expect your puppy to eliminate more than once on every journey out. Take your puppy out immediately after sleep, play or feeding.

Potty training can take as little as a few weeks and as much as a few months. In either case, experiment with giving your dog more freedom a little at a time. Your efforts now will pay off significantly in the long run.

If you need more help with toilet training or stopping your dog from urine marking, ring us at Ultimutt DogZone.