

Potty Training Schedule

Just like you, your dog has an internal clock. Most mammals, including humans and dogs, are programmed by nature to be awake during daylight hours and sleep when it's dark. There are some exceptions, but this is generally true. This is based on your biological clock and it's related to circadian rhythms that respond to changes in light and darkness.

You can make your dog's biological clock work for you when it comes to potty training by putting your dog on a good schedule that coincides with his natural urges. For instance, most animals will wake up when it becomes light outside. The first thing they need to do is relieve themselves. Then they will start thinking about food. And so on. If you apply these normal impulses to your puppy or dog, it makes house training much easier for you and your puppy.

The Secret to Success

The secret to potty train your dog is to **regulate access to water and food**, and then teach him to go potty in a designated area*. Most dog owners make the mistake of leaving food and water available for their dog all day long. That's when accidents happen, because dogs, like humans, can only retain so much food and drink.

Instead of leaving water down all day for your dog, put ice cubes in his water bowl. Because the ice cubes melt gradually, they help regulate your dog's water intake. A couple of ice cubes, depending on the dog's size, should be enough fluid for the day.

*If you prefer not to use a crate to follow this schedule, you must assign a *small enclosed area* to keep your dog during training. The **designated potty area** (indoors or outdoors) should have different texture or feel than your carpet or rug.

Creating a Potty Schedule

Most dogs can be potty trained in less than a week, some may take longer. Once potty trained you will continue limiting his access to food and water to prevent accidents in the future.

The Rules:

1. Potty breaks should not last more than 5-7 minutes.
2. Carry your puppy or walk out on a leash from the enclosed area to the designated area to poop and pee and back.
3. The instant your dog finishes doing his business, enthusiastically praise "Good Poop" or "Good Pee" and reward him with a small tasty treat or a life reward (a toy, something that your dog enjoys or simply pet and praise).
4. At feeding times, leave the food and water down for only 5 minutes – even if the puppy doesn't finish his food. In time he will understand that is his opportunity to eat.

Potty Training Schedule

Sample Potty Schedule:

- 7:00 am Wake up and take the puppy to the designated potty area to relieve himself
- 7:30 am Feed the puppy his breakfast
- 8:00 am Take the puppy to the designated area again for another potty break (many puppies need to relieve themselves again after eating)
- 9:00 to 9:15 am Puppy playtime
- 9:16 am Take the puppy to the designated area to potty again (puppies usually need to relieve themselves after a play session)
- 10:00 am Nap
- 12:00 pm Take the puppy to the designated potty area (puppies usually need to relieve themselves after a nap)
- 12:30 pm Lunch for the puppy (Feed puppies about 3 meals per day until they are about six months old. Then you can cut them back to 1 or 2 meals per day.)
- 1:00 pm Take the puppy out to potty following a meal
- 1:30 pm Nap
- 3:00 pm Take the puppy out to potty following a nap
- 3:06 pm 15-minute playtime
- 3:21 pm Take the puppy out to potty following a play session
- 6:00 pm Dinner time for your puppy
- 6:10 pm Take your puppy out to potty following dinner
- 7:00 to 7:30 pm Time spent with the family (petting, playing, brushing your puppy)
- 9:00 pm Take your puppy to the designated area to potty before bedtime
- 9:30 pm Time for puppy to go to bed. Use a crate if your puppy is having any problems with his potty training overnight.

This is just a sample schedule. You will need to adjust your puppy's schedule so it fits your home life. However, do make sure that your puppy always has a chance to potty after eating, after play times, and after naps. These are normal times for a dog, or any animal, to need to relieve themselves. Be sure to feed your puppy his dinner relatively early so he won't have an accident during the night. If you feed your puppy his dinner at 9 pm then, of course, he will need to relieve himself about 3 am and he may do it on your living room rug.

Once your puppy is a little older you will be able to cut out some of the trips outside. Your puppy will be able to go longer without needing to potty. He will also become better at being able to let you know when he needs to go out. But when you first get your puppy, this is a good type of schedule to follow.