

PUPPY TOILET TRAINING GUIDE

FREE PUPPY TOILET TRAINING E-BOOK



**DO'S AND DON'TS OF
TOILET TRAINING A PUPPY**

The First Words

Puppies sure are cute, but they're also hard work. There are many things that you need to do to raise a balanced and confident adult dog that's a pleasure to be around. Basic obedience training, socialising and of course toilet training. So, to help you get ahead, I've created this toilet training E-book that includes all the tricks and tips for successful toilet training... And the things to avoid.

When you bring your new puppy home, toilet training might not be the first thing on your mind. The sound of tiny puppy walking around, the sweet puppy smell and irresistible puppy tummies make even the toughest of men melt. Very often the usual daily routines go out the window and you spend every waking moment with your new family member. As lovely as it is to focus all your attention on your new pup, it's important to settle back into your normal everyday life as soon as possible. And one of the most important things is to make sure that toilet training starts as soon as you bring the puppy through the door. This will ensure that your puppy knows what you expect from them from day one.

When puppies are born their mother will keep the den area clean. There is never urine or faeces in their 'nest'. This is believed to be done to keep the puppies healthy and to protect them from parasites. As the puppies grow older they start copying their mother by going to the toilet outside of the den. Therefore toilet training your puppy is simply following the example of their own mum.

Toilet training your puppy can be very stressful, but it doesn't need to be. Like with any training, you need to focus on positive reinforcement, be patient and consistent. This, along with the knowledge of how to do it right and necessary toilet training equipment will set you up for success in no time.

1. Preparing Your Home for Toilet Training

Let's start with the first moments at your puppy's new home, your home that is. First thing to remember is that your home is a completely new environment for your puppy, and the first few days can be stressful for them. Everything around them is new and they don't have their mother or siblings around anymore. Your pup needs to get used to you as much as to the new environment, house, backyard and neighbourhood included. And it's not just the sights, but also the smells and noises. So be understanding and patient with your puppy. All though you should start toilet training your puppy as soon as you bring them home, remember that it takes time and patience and every puppy is different.

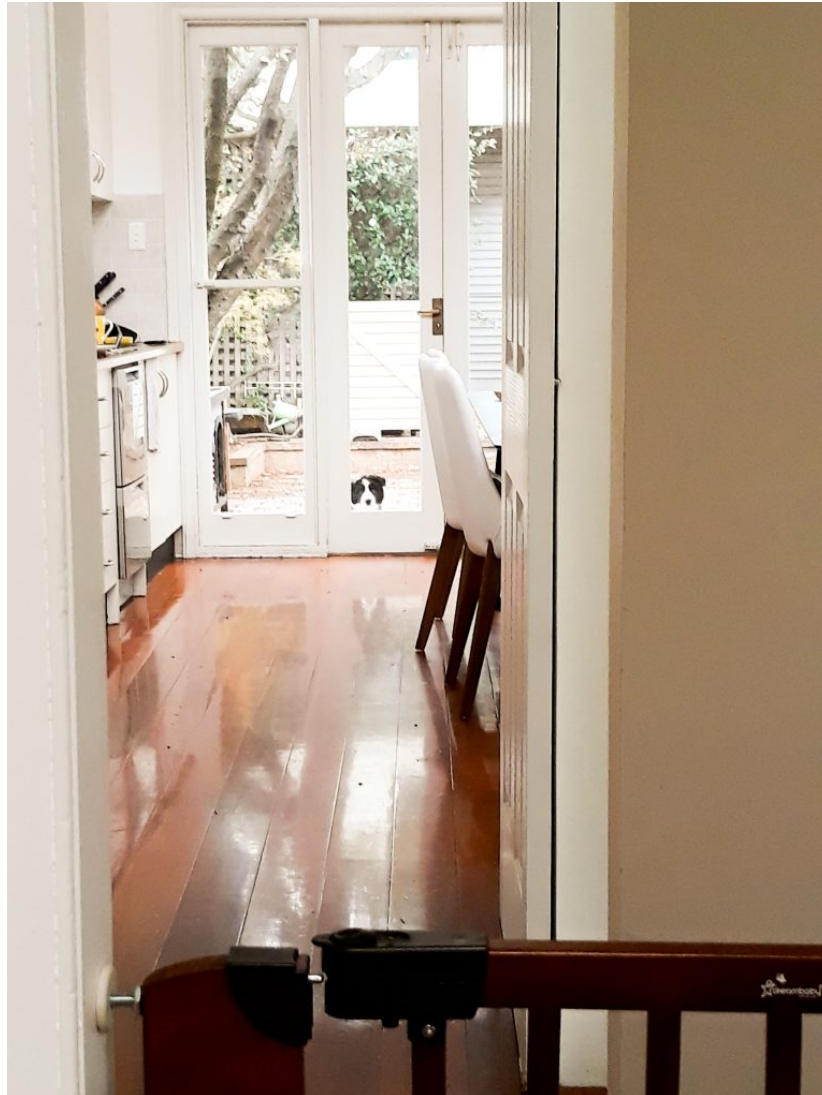
There are a few things you can do even before bringing the puppy home to ensure your toilet training gets the best possible start. And the most important thing of them is preparing your home for toilet training.

Toilet training is all about managing the learning experience for your dog. You want your dog to learn it the right way from day one, right? This doesn't mean that accidents won't happen but it reduces them significantly and speeds up the learning process. No matter what, toilet training takes time but it's a huge difference between taking a few months or a year. So let's prepare your house first for the arrival of your new best friend.

There are lots of useful products for preventing accidents, managing a puppy's access to the wrong places for toileting and to encourage the right behaviour. Let's start with preventing accidents and setting your dog up for success.

As dogs learn through experience, the more opportunities your puppy gets to toilet in the wrong places the more often it will happen. It's as simple as that. So preventing your puppy from learning it in the wrong way is very important. This means managing the puppy's access to to the wrong places for toileting

Puppy Gates and Pens



If you bring your puppy home without managing where the puppy is allowed in the house, your chance of accidents is very high. Puppies have to go to the toilet every few hours so this gives your puppy plenty of opportunities to run around the house and toilet all over the place. And the more often they do it, the harder the training. Puppy pens and gates are very important management tools for the times when no one is keeping an eye on the puppy. They prevent your puppy from learning to do it wrong.

What we need to understand about toilet training, and dogs in general, is that they learn through experience. Therefore every toilet break is a learning experience for your puppy. This means that even when we use puppy pens and gates to prevent accidents all over

the house, we also need to think about what the environment is like for your puppy's learning in those areas.

Do you have carpet, mats or rugs on the floor in those areas where your puppy is allowed?

If so, there's a high chance your puppy learns to go on them. Remove them if possible until the training is done.

Are there soft surfaces, like a dog bed or couches for your dog to lie on?

Be aware that your puppy might learn to go on them too. I would recommend using an area without them and an old towel/blanket as your dog's bed at least for the first few weeks. This is to prevent your dog from learning to toilet on anything you don't want them to use later on.

Toilet Breaks

Are you providing something to toilet on?

This is very important for the learning. Because puppies have to go anyway it is up to us to provide a appropriate place for it. And because puppies don't have a full control of their bladders yet they need to go more often than adult dogs. Even if you want your dog to learn to go outside, you still need to be prepared for accidents inside. Well, that is if the puppy is allowed inside.



Outside, doggy toilet and pee mats or paper training are pretty much your options for an appropriate toilet.

Do you have an apartment dog without access to go outside?

Then your options are pee mats, paper training and doggy toilet. If you have a yard, toilet training just got a lot easier. Especially if the yard is secured enough for the puppy to be left outside when alone.

But let's get back inside to prepare your home. I used both a puppy pen and gate myself. My puppy had an access to go outside so it made sense to block her access to the living room and rest of the house when unsupervised. This left her a yard and kitchen to roam free in. The kitchen area didn't have anything on the floors, only minimal furniture and there were many pee mats for her to pee on if needed.



I used a puppy pen for the nights to sleep in. I started [crate training](#) her right away to make sure she learnt to like her “pen time”. Her

pen was covered with puppy pee mats to teach her to toilet on them if she had to go during the night. She had a blanket to sleep on, toys, treats and a little bit of water to keep her comfortable. Be aware of the water though, the more a puppy drinks the more they pee! I wanted her to focus on sleeping during the night so I didn't have a full bowl of water for her.

Cleaning the Accidents

When toilet training a puppy accidents will happen. But if dealt with correctly they won't set back your toilet training. Cleaning the accidents in a right way is very important to eliminate the smells and therefore preventing your dog from going on that same spot again.

Pet stains can be very difficult to remove. Uric acid crystals found in dog urine can only be removed by using an enzyme cleaner. Before bringing your puppy home, be prepared for accidents and buy yourself a speciality pet stain and odour cleaner. You can find them in pet stores. Regular household cleaning products with soap and chemicals aren't able to remove the odours because they can't break down the crystals. This is why you need an enzymatic cleaner formulated especially for pet stains.

Time off work

I get a lot of questions from frustrated puppy owners about how to prevent your puppy from making a huge mess at home while you're at work. And the answer is, you don't. If you leave your small puppy home alone for your 8h work day (plus travel time) don't expect to come back to a clean home. There's no way your puppy could hold it in for that long!

That's why you should always organise some time off work for at least the first week or so. Use your annual leave, organise some shorter days, work from home or come back home for a long lunch in the middle of the day. This doesn't mean that you should spend

all this time glued to your puppy. No, you should get back to your daily routines and use this time to start teaching your puppy all the things they need to master later on and to keep an eye on your dog's learning process. This doesn't only mean toilet training but also teaching them to cope alone.

If you can't organise time off work, hire a dog walker/trainer/pet sitter to come and entertain your puppy during the day. They can provide the puppy the much needed toilet breaks and human company. Or consider taking your dog to a dog daycare. But remember, if they don't have an outside area or pee mats or dog toilets for the dogs, it's not really helpful for your toilet training!

2. Associations and Experiences

Before we get into the training methods for toilet training, I want you to take a closer look into how your dog learns. When you fully understand your dog's point of view you become better teacher for your dog and toilet training gets a lot easier.

There are two main ways dogs learn. They learn by the immediate consequences of their actions which is called operant conditioning and by associations better known as classical conditioning. Let's take a look at how these two learning methods work in toilet training.

Operant Conditioning

Dogs do things that benefit them and stop doing things that don't. They are also very eager to please us and seek for our attention. If your puppy gets excited praise, attention, playtime or treats from you every time they toilet in the right spot, it becomes beneficial for them to repeat the behaviour. They learn that it's a nice thing to toilet on that particular spot and will repeat it.

Classical Conditioning

Dogs learn quickly how to predict what will occur in their world. Dogs are learning from their environment in this way all the time, whether we intend them to or not. If peeing gets them a treat, they will learn to do it to get the treat. If they are always taken to the same spot to toilet they will learn to associate that spot with their toilet needs.

And if you keep an eye on the signs your puppy show's before they need to go and right away lift your puppy on the right spot, they will connect those signs with the toilet spot. They will learn that when they are experiencing those signs they should be on that spot. This is learning through association.

Puppies can also learn to associate a certain word with their toilet needs if you start saying the word every time they are relieving

themselves. But the word must be said while they are doing it! (Not before or after!)

When it comes to toilet training, a puppy will associate a toilet area with the following:

- Smell of urine, faeces or ammonia.
- Location (outside, inside).
- The feeling of the surface beneath their paws (grass, tile, soft surfaces etc.).
- Physiological things such as after food, when they wake up, and after a play.
- Commands. A dog can be trained to go to the toilet.

Understanding Associations

Dog training is all about associations. A puppy learns by associating things with different results. Whether it's about training basic commands or socialisation with other dogs and people, dogs learn to connect certain situations with certain behaviours and outcomes. This also means associating certain feelings with certain situations, in good and bad. This is very important when we think about our dog's experience and how they feel about it. Especially for a puppy, all of their early experiences should be positive ones!

So when you think about it, your puppy's toilet training has started before you brought the puppy home. To fully understand your dog's toilet training experience we need to think about the first 8 weeks of their lives.

What were the experiences the puppy got at the breeders home?

If the puppies were kept inside the whole time, then they would have learnt to toilet inside only. If they were kept outside they would have learnt to toilet outside. This was the case with my current dog. She was a puppy of a dog that was mostly an outside dog and she was born in the summer time so she spent most of her first 8 weeks

outside. Needless to say, toilet training her was very easy, because going inside wasn't "normal" for her.

If the puppies were inside, what kind of toilet training was provided?

Did they have puppy pee mats, dog toilet or did the breeder use soft towels for their toilet needs?

What ever the early experiences were it doesn't mean that your toilet training has been set already. But it does help to understand what your puppy has learnt to do so far. And especially with rescue dogs, this is important thing to consider. Rescue dogs usually lack toilet training due the life in the kennel environment.

3. Reward your puppy

Positive reinforcement is the most successful dog training method. And it's a very successful and effective way of toilet training.

What is positive dog training?

Positive training is not a scientific term. As a term, it can be confusing even for dog trainers. Positive dog training means using only positive training methods when shaping a dog's behaviour, positive reinforcement to be exact.

What is positive reinforcement?

We use it in our human world too, all though we might not think about it. Did you receive a bonus at work? You were just positively reinforced. The positive reinforcement is an additional stimulus, very often known as a reward. It occurs after the behaviour that increases the likelihood of the behaviour to occur in the future. You would continue working hard to get another bonus, right?

There are many different types of positive reinforcers that can be used to shape a dog's behaviour. For example food, toys, cuddles, attention, walk etc... But the type of reinforcer used depends on upon the individual and the situation. You need to know what it is that your dog values. Even when you are training the same dog, you might have to modify your training and the reinforcers you are using based on the progress of the training.

When toilet training a puppy using rewards, you can use anything your puppy likes. A reward could be in the form of praise, a cuddle or pat, a tummy rub or even a play. You can also give your dog a delicious treat or a favourite toy to play with.

Remember to reward your puppy every single time they toilet in the right way in the right place.

If you don't have any treats handy, use excited praising and attention. There's no fear of overdoing it! The more you reward the more likely that behaviour will happen again. And that's exactly what toilet training is all about: teaching your dog how to do it right.

When your dog has learnt to toilet in the right place you can start rewarding and praising them less. Don't stop it all of a sudden so that you dog doesn't think it's not beneficial for them any more. Start reducing the rewards gradually.

4. Preventing accidents

Preventing accidents is a very important aspect of successful toilet training. It's good to remember that puppies need to go to toilet often, every few hours! Keeping an eye on your puppy is very important when preventing accidents. You should always use puppy pens and gates with pee mats when you can't supervise your puppy.

There are signs your dog will show when they need to go. While some puppies may be quite direct in alerting you when they have to go to the toilet, others may be very subtle. Generally, the older the puppy, the easier it is to recognise these signs. Very young puppies may not be able to clearly indicate when they have to go.

Here are some signs your puppy might show:

- sniffing around
- fidgeting
- beginning to circle before squatting
- abrupt changes in activity, behaviour, or play
- circling
- whining
- going to the door; scratching or pawing at the door
- returning to a previously soiled area in the house
- sniffing or licking the groin/rear

Sniffing is one of the first signs your puppy shows when they need to toilet. When your puppy starts spinning around and sniffing a particular area, they most likely need to go. This may happen in an area your puppy has previously soiled in. That's why it's important to use proper cleaning products.

Avoid Ammonia-Based Products. The smell of ammonia can encourage your puppy to toilet on that spot again.

Use Enzyme-Based Products. The best cleaning products to clean accidents are enzyme-based. These products contain enzymes which destroy the odour-causing bacteria and eliminate

the smell.

Prevent Access to Hot Spots. If your puppy keeps eliminating in the same spot, you'd better prevent access to that area. This is to stop your puppy from learning a habit of toileting there while they are still learning proper toilet manners.

Another one of the very first signs that your dog needs to toilet involves a *change in behaviour*. Your puppy may suddenly stop in his tracks. He might have been playing with a ball and then suddenly moved away and walked to a specific area of the house to toilet.

Many puppies will also appear a bit *restless* when they need to go to the toilet. If the restlessness is not caused by something happening around them, then your puppy could be telling you that he needs to go.

Whining could also be one indicator that a puppy needs to be let out. While whining may mean several things, your puppy most likely has to toilet if it's coupled with any of the signs mentioned above.

If your puppy goes to the door and starts *barking, standing, or even scratching at the door*, it's a good idea to check whether they need to go by letting them out.

There are also certain situations and times you should try taking your puppy out. *Puppies usually need to go soon after eating/drinking, waking up and after play time with you or other dogs.*

Keeping an eye out for these signs and situations is important so that we can ensure successful toilet training and do it as quickly as possible. After you've learnt to recognise these early signs of possible need to toilet, it's up to you to teach what it is that you want your puppy to do.

First you need to choose an area where you would like your puppy to toilet.

Choosing an area you will use every time for your puppy's toilet training is very important because it helps them to get a routine. Dog's are creatures of habit and like daily routines. There are many options for this. You might want to use a pee pad or puppy toilet on your apartment balcony or in a bathroom. Or you might want your puppy to learn to go outside.

The moment your pup indicates a need to toilet, pick the pup up and take them to this area. This helps to teach them that they need to go to this spot or area when they feel the need to go to the toilet.

Picking the pup up and taking them to the toilet area straight away is crucial, so they associate the area with the feeling they're getting. Picking up the puppy stops them from continuing to toilet until you place them on the right spot.

If your puppy has an accident DO NOT:

- **Rub the puppy's nose/face in it.** This is an old-school method that teaches your dog that you don't approve of them toileting in general. So next time they'll toilet when you're not around or hide their poo/pee!
- **Shout or scare the puppy.** This might make you feel better but it won't help with toilet training because your puppy doesn't understand your shouting. Once again they might associate it with toileting in general. And it's most likely harmful to the bond between you and your pup.
- **Discipline them after it has happened.** Dogs live in the moment. If you punish your dog after something has already happened it's too late. They won't make the association between you being angry and the mess on the floor, instead they might associate it with you coming home. This will also teach your dog that you are unpredictable and they might learn to fear you.

- **Don't Have Unrealistic Expectations.** Young puppies under 3 months of age don't have sufficient bowel and bladder control. They simply can't hold it in for long!

If your puppy has an accident DO:

- **Let them know they're doing something wrong.** If you see your puppy peeing or pooping in the wrong place, take them to the designated toilet spot straight away.
- **Ignore the mess.** Once again there's no point in telling your puppy off after the accident has already happened. Just clean it up and make sure to pay better attention to your puppy next time.
- **Clean it up quickly and carefully using an enzymatic cleaner.** Remove all traces of the accident as soon as possible.

5. Toilet Breaks

Preventing accidents is a big part of toilet training. The more often your puppy toilets in wrong places the more often they will do it. Once again it comes down to learning the right habit. If they never get a chance to do it wrong they will learn quicker, makes sense right? That's why giving your puppy toilet breaks throughout the day is important.

Luckily for us, the experience has already taught us some potential times your pup might need to toilet. The key times are after waking up from a nap, after eating and after a play. Puppies can't hold their bladder for very long yet, so give them plenty of opportunities to go. This will of course change as they get older and can control their bladder better. There are several training techniques for toilet training. Let's learn the most common ones!

How to toilet train your puppy outside

1. Set regular feeding times for your puppy and keep an eye on when they drink water.
2. Take your puppy outside every few hours. Also take them outside immediately after eating, drinking, waking up and playing.
3. Place them in the designated toilet spot.
4. Do not play with your puppy or give them any attention whilst you are outside. This is a trip to toilet, not a play session. Give your dog a few minutes in peace to do their business.
5. Straight after they have peed or pooped praise them and perhaps give them a treat. You can also reward your puppy with cuddles or short play time.

How to toilet train a puppy inside

1. Set regular feeding times for your puppy and keep an eye on when they drink.
2. Take your puppy to their indoor dog toilet every few hours. Also take them there immediately after eating, drinking, waking up and playing.
3. Place them on the dog toilet.
4. Do not play with your puppy or give them any attention. Your puppy needs to learn that only one thing happens when they are on the doggy toilet.
5. Straight after they have peed or pooped praise them and perhaps give them a treat.
6. Once they have been praised allow them to get off the indoor dog potty.
7. If you see your puppy sniffing the indoor dog potty, praise them as this will encourage them to use it. Make sure they do not play with it or sleep on it as this is not what it is for.

Paper Training

Paper training is a very effective way to housetrain puppies. I've used this method with my first two dogs. Paper training teaches your puppy to toilet on progressively smaller areas of paper, or training pads, until you are able to direct the puppy to a specific area where you want them to toilet. This may eventually mean outdoors or in a certain spot inside.

How to Paper Train a Puppy

1. Use a puppy pen or gate to create an area where the puppy can be confined when unsupervised.

2. Line the entire area with training pads or old newspapers. At first the puppy will toilet all over the place, but this way it will always be on a pad. Remove soiled pads frequently.
3. Reduce the number of pads or papers by taking away one pad every few days, leaving a small area without a pad. Because the puppy is learning a habit of toileting on the pads, he should gravitate to the area where the pads are still covering the floor.
4. Puppies don't like to toilet too near where they eat or sleep, so start removing the pads that are closest to the pup's bed and bowls.
5. Over the next few weeks, gradually reduce the pads by removing each pad until there is one single pad left. Make sure that the remaining pad is the furthest from pup's bed and bowl. If you want your puppy to use an inside toilet, start moving the last pad towards it. Finally you can start placing the pad on it. When the puppy is confident about using that pad, remove it and keep an eye on your puppy to see whether he's using the dog toilet from then on.
6. If you want your puppy to start going outside, take a partially soiled pad to your outside toilet area and place it on the ground. This will teach the puppy to toilet outside while still having the comforting feel of the pad underneath his paws. Once the puppy is confident about going outside, stop using indoor pads completely.



Take Your Puppy Out Every Two Hours

It's a good idea to take your puppy out frequently. I have used "the 2h method" with all of my dogs.

1. Set a timer for every second hour. When the timer goes off, take your puppy to the designated toilet area. It doesn't matter whether it's outside or indoors.
2. Once there, be patient as your puppy may not go instantly. Give it time, but do not cuddle, give attention or play while waiting otherwise your puppy may confuse toilet time with time with you.
3. If your puppy doesn't go, don't be alarmed. After a few minutes, simply take them back inside and try again a little later. Dogs are not robots after all.
4. If your puppy does go, reward them straight away. Use encouraging praises and make a fuss that they have gone to the toilet in the right spot. You can even give your pup a treat for a good job. But let the puppy finish toileting first so that you don't confuse them to stop.
5. It's also a good idea to stay outside for a bit after your dog is done. If your dog likes to stay outside and you only take them there to toilet they might stop toileting in the hope of staying outside longer. So, have a little play outside once your puppy has successfully gone to the toilet. This ensures your puppy

associates outside with their toilet needs and a place they can play, rather than one or the other.

What to do when leaving your puppy alone

Toilet training should be continued even when you are not home. This obviously means that you won't be able to keep an eye on your puppy. Young puppies should not be allowed to roam the house freely when alone because you are not there to reinforce toilet training.

If you will be gone for only an hour or so, your puppy can remain in their crate (if you choose to crate train your puppy). Cover the crate with puppy pads, leave your dog a blanket and some toys in it. This gives your puppy a chance to learn how to hold their bladder but be prepared for any accidents as they are still learning.

If you are going to be gone for longer than an hour it's not a good idea to leave your puppy in a small crate. You need to confine your dog to a small area of your home such as a bathroom or kitchen. You can use puppy gates or bigger play pens for this. It would be best if this area had solid, hard flooring as your puppy is still learning correct toilet behaviour.

Make sure you leave your puppy with the following things:

- Clean puppy pads (that can be secured in a puppy pad holder) and/or your Pet Loo.
- A blanket or dog bed.
- A bowl of water that is not easy to tip over.
- Some safe puppy toys designed for chewing, such as rubber Kongs.

How to toilet train your puppy at night

First, you need to decide where you want your dog to sleep. If you want your dog to sleep in certain room or in the bedroom with you,

this is where your puppy should begin sleeping. If you start off by letting the puppy sleep in the same room with you, it will become difficult to move them to another location later on. So think about what it is that you want your dog to do as an adult dog and start that way right away!

If you have chosen to crate train your puppy then a crate is the ideal place for them to sleep in. I have crate trained all of my dogs.

Benefits of crate training are:

- It is small enough to discourage them from soiling in it.
- Puppies can easily be enclosed to encourage them to sleep and prevent them from wandering of and going to toilet on the floor.
- The floor of a crate is non-porous and you can easily cover it with puppy pads in case of accidents.

If you don't want to use a crate you will have to find another way of enclosing them in a safe area, where you can still hear them.

When you first bring your puppy home you should set alarms in order to wake up and take them outside or to use their indoor doggy toilet during the night. Once again this is only a toilet trip, don't make a fuss about it or give the puppy any attention. Otherwise your puppy might learn to wake you up when they want attention!

Take your puppy to toilet twice a night until you are confident that they can hold on until the morning. Most puppies will learn what's going on quickly and they'll wake you up with whining when they need to go!

4. Add A Cue

It will make your life easier if your puppy learns to toilet on command. It won't be needed every time, but there will be moments when you'll need your puppy to go to the toilet quickly. For example, before bedtime or on a long car ride. Wouldn't it be easy if at these times you could simply give your dog a verbal command to relieve themselves? Well, it can be done and it all starts as a puppy.

1. Whenever you see your puppy relieving themselves, start saying a word you want them to learn and associate with their toilet needs. I use a word "toilet" myself. ***Say it during the fact.*** That way, whenever your dog hears the word 'toilet' they associate it with the need to relieve themselves.
2. Praise your dog after they are done, you can even use a treat reward to really motivate your dog to toilet.
3. When you have been saying the word while your puppy is doing their business for a good few months, start anticipating their need to toilet and use the word right before they start relieving themselves. This way the word becomes a cue for going to the toilet.
4. You can check how well your dog is learning the word by taking your dog to their toilet area and saying the word before they start peeing or pooping. If your dog chooses to toilet after the word, you'll know they've made the connection with the command.

5. Accidents Will Happen

One of the most important things you need to remember when it comes to toilet training is that accidents will happen. It's a fact. It's important not to get angry about it. It's highly unlikely your dog has done it on purpose, and getting angry will only make things worse.

Puppies do not have full control over their bladder. That's what toilet training is all about, teaching them how to hold and where they should toilet. It's all part of the process. So, accidents can happen without the dog even being able to prevent or control them.

Never shout, become angry, say 'no', or punish your dog for going in the wrong spot. It doesn't teach your dog where to go. But it does teach them to be scared about going in front of you. And this makes training much harder. Don't make a fuss or an issue over the mess either, simply clean it up. If it helps, you can join a boxing club and get rid of the frustration that way.

If you notice your dog is about to go in the wrong place, interrupt them in a calm and cheerful way, and take them to the correct spot. Remember to praise them when they go.

If you are really struggling with toilet training your puppy, please seek professional help from an experienced dog trainer or vet. Occasionally there may be a medical reason why your puppy has issues with toilet training. Your vet is the perfect professional to help you with any medical needs and advise you how to treat it.