

Avidog's Puppy Potty Training Solution



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Welcome From Your Avidog® Team

*Y*ou are about to launch into one of the most important projects that you and your puppy will do together—potty training! A potty-trained dog is a pleasure to live with while an un-potty-trained dog presents many challenges for its owner. Although people have been potty training dogs for decades, the process can be tricky.

We have gathered in this book the secrets and methods that we have used to help hundreds and hundreds of people potty train their dogs. Using our proven program, you too can raise a trustworthy dog and have both a clean house and peace of mind.

Best of luck with your puppy!

Gayle, Lise and Marcy

Your Avidog® Team



Here's the scoop on potty training!

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Chapter 1

Introduction To Potty Training Your Puppy

Potty training is the process of teaching a puppy or dog where and when they should urinate and defecate. Although some owners successfully potty train their dogs, many others are unable to complete the process. As a result, they and their dogs suffer.

Potty training a dog is a simple process but not necessarily an easy one. A few puppies get the idea right away but the vast majority require consistent owners who understand the process. If you are one of those people who understand potty training basics, you will be set to tackle this challenge and raise a wonderful dog that is a pleasure to live with. Regardless of whether you just brought your puppy home or if you have been struggling with potty training for a while, this chapter will lay out the basics for potty training for your puppy.

The 5 Biggest Potty Training Mistakes



New clients often come to us because their puppies are not getting the hang of potty training. Upon investigation, we find out that they are doing a number of things wrong so their puppies are misunderstanding what is expected of them.

The top five potty-training errors owners make are:



1) Scolding or punishing their pup for peeing or pooping in the house. Unless they are caught in the act, puppies will not understand why they are being punished. Even if they are caught in the act, unless they are over a year of age and fully



understand potty training, punishing your puppy will just make them fearful and anxious. Researchers estimate that if your response—either positive or negative—does not occur within 3 seconds of a dog's action, it will have no idea that the two are related. All punishment does is make dogs fearful of and stressed by their owners, determined to hide their pee and poop in the house, and convinced they live with crazy people.

- 2) **Taking their puppy out at fixed intervals**, usually every hour. This develops what we call a “one-hour bladder” and does not enable the puppy's muscles to hold it longer.
- 3) **Not cleaning accidents up thoroughly** so your pup cannot smell it. Remember a puppy's sense of smell is much better than ours and dogs are drawn to investigate pee and poop. So, if you do not clean up well, your puppy is likely to keep going in that same spot.
- 4) **Giving too much freedom to their puppy too soon**. As puppy owners, we are always in a hurry! We know it is better to have a potty-trained dog than to be in the midst of potty training a puppy. Be patient! Too much freedom too soon will set your puppy back for weeks or months.

And the #1 reason that puppies do not get fully potty trained is...

- 1) **Not using a crate or pen for potty training their puppy**, thus giving the puppy the opportunity to easily move away from its immediate living area to pee or poop. Confining your puppy's living space is the only way to succeed at potty training.

Remember, just as you finish potty training your puppy, your puppy will be a teenager. During adolescence, dogs tend to chew, explore and destroy things more than they did as young puppies. They have increased energy and curiosity with a tinge of independence. So, don't put those crates and ex-pens away too soon. You'll be needing them for a while!

Through the Avidog Puppy Potty Training Solution, you will learn how to avoid these mistakes and properly potty train your puppy. So read on!



Potty Training Is Natural To Dogs

Our dogs are amazing! Early in their lives, the vast majority of dogs not only learn to pee and poop where and when we want them to but they can also “hold it” for many hours, far longer than we can. They are truly remarkable!

Cleanliness Is Natural

Dogs are able to learn to be potty trained because of their natural desire to keep their immediate living area clean. Thus, potty training is based on gradually giving a puppy more and more space as she is able to physically and mentally handle it.

Early Habits Are Key

Since dogs are creatures of habit, establishing the potty-training habit right from the start goes a long way in ensuring your puppy becomes a trustworthy dog, one that is a pleasure to live with.

Potty Training Builds Better Relationships

Not only will you be happier when your puppy is potty trained but your pup will be happier, too! Once potty-trained, your dog will:

- ◆ be confident that you will be happy to see her when you come home,
- ◆ be able to communicate her needs to you and in turn be confident that you will understand and respond to them,
- ◆ not feel that she is disappointing you,
- ◆ not get punished for things she does not understand or cannot do,
- ◆ enjoy having freedom in the house with you,
- ◆ be able to participate more in your life, and
- ◆ be welcome in other people’s homes.



Using their instincts, potty training started at four weeks of age with this litter of golden retriever puppies.



So Why Is Potty Training A Puppy So Hard?

Although cleanliness is natural to and good for dogs, potty training can still be a challenge for many owners. How come? Well, there are three main reasons:

- 1) Potty training requires **muscle development** that many puppies do not have until they are 5 or 6 months old. Some take even longer.
- 2) Potty training also requires **mental maturity** in a puppy and the ability to understand where and when to potty, which takes time to get across to puppies.
- 3) Finally, potty training requires puppies to be **confined**, which they complain about, often loudly. Most owners do not know how to teach a puppy to be relaxed and quiet when confined. The end result is a dog that cannot be either confined or potty trained.

Our potty training solution helps owners develop their pup's physical ability and mental understanding by teaching them to be calm and relaxed while confined. It solves all three challenges in a simple, step-by-step program.

Combining Potty And Confinement Training

Balancing these two training goals—potty and confinement training—is one of the biggest challenges you will face with your new puppy. Why? Because you must always keep both in mind while you interact with your puppy but what you need to do to successfully train one behavior can untrain the other.

Like babies who cry, puppies bark and whine when they want something. Puppies bark in their crates when they:

- ◆ have to go potty
- ◆ are feeling lonely/lost/frightened
- ◆ want to get out to play or be with their owners

Your challenge is that you must respond differently to these three situations and you must do so relatively quickly! If your pup is barking because he:



- ◆ **has to potty**, you must take him out immediately and not correct him for barking.
- ◆ is **feeling lonely**, lost or frightened, you need to reassure him by dangling your fingers in the crate and reassuring him but NOT take him out of the crate.
- ◆ is **demanding** you take him out of the crate to play or hang out, you must NOT take him out of the crate or even talk to him.

Oh my goodness! You have to respond three different ways to the same barking puppy! How can you tell the difference between the barks? Well, when you first bring your puppy home you can't. You don't know your puppy well enough to differentiate between when he is barking to tell you he needs to potty, is feeling lost or lonely, or wants attention. The good news is that most puppies adjust to their new homes in a few days so they no longer feel lost or frightened. You should be down to two reasons for barking in short order.

If you pay attention, you will be able to tell the difference between his barks after a few weeks. In the meantime, it is important that you take him out when he barks if you think there is any possibility that he has to potty. However, you must do it correctly so he still learns to be relaxed and quiet in his crate. Read on to find out how to do it right!

Potty Training Keys

When potty training your pup, **your goals are to teach:**

- ◆ **where** to pee and poop,
- ◆ **when** to pee and poop,
- ◆ **when she asks** to go outside, someone will respond, and
- ◆ **all indoor places** are potty-free zones.

This will require that your puppy:

- ◆ **understands** what you want,
- ◆ is **physically able** to do it, and
- ◆ is **motivated** to make the effort to only pee and poop when and where you want.





Here are some details you should keep in mind:

- ◆ Puppies need to **pee more during the day than they do at night**. Many owners do not realize that puppies can hold it much longer at night than during the day. Like people, dogs are diurnal, meaning they are more active during the day than night. As a result, puppies produce less urine at night and thus need to go out less often. The majority of puppies will sleep through the night months before they can be completely potty trained during the day. Since sleep is a priority for us, we count that as a blessing!
- ◆ Puppies **vary in how many times they need to poop** during the day but twice, morning and evening, is most common. This variation results from individual differences in digestion but also the quality and compatibility of the dog food that you feed. If a dog cannot digest its food well or eats ingredients that she cannot digest, she will poop more. So if your puppy is 5 months of age and poops more than twice a day, consider changing to a better quality or different food.
- ◆ **Puppies less than 4 months old** will usually need to go potty:
 - ❖ 15 to 30 minutes after eating or drinking,
 - ❖ upon waking from a nap or long rest period,
 - ❖ during or after vigorous play or excitement,
 - ❖ MUCH more frequently when active than when confined.
- ◆ When quiet and confined, pups can typically hold their urine the number of hours that equals their age in months plus one. Here is a chart that will guide you in deciding how long your puppy can most likely go without pottying during the day.

Age In Weeks	Daytime resting <u>maximum</u> time between potty breaks	Age In Weeks	Daytime resting <u>maximum</u> time between potty breaks
7 - 9 weeks	3 hours	18-19 weeks	5.5 hours
10-11 weeks	3.5 hours	20-21 weeks	6 hours
12-13 weeks	4 hours	22-23 weeks	6.5 hours
14-15 weeks	4.5 hours	24 weeks	7 hours
16-17 weeks	5 hours	Adult	7-12 hours Depending upon breed and/or size



- ◆ **Puppies need time to develop the muscle control to be potty trained.** Although puppies appear to grow quickly, it takes months for them to develop the muscle control for potty training. Very young puppies are only able to toddle a foot or two and can only hold it a few seconds before they have to potty. With training, their muscles will strengthen and they will gradually be able to go longer and travel further to potty.
- ◆ **Puppies need the right conditions to develop the muscle control to be potty trained.** If puppies are raised in facilities that allow them to potty wherever and whenever they feel like it, it will take much longer to potty train them. Similarly, if puppies are raised where they cannot get away from pee and poop, they may lose their natural desire for cleanliness. One or both of these may be the case if your puppy was kept in a pen or crate that did not provide separate potty and play/sleeping areas. If your puppy grew up this way, whether with a breeder or in a shelter, it does not mean that you cannot potty train your puppy, but it means it will take longer to help them figure it all out.
- ◆ **Puppies do not inherently understand that your house is their “room.”** Puppies want to keep their immediate living area, what we will call their “room,” clean but we have to teach them that our homes fall under the definition of “immediate living area.” Once they are clean in our homes, we must teach them that they should consider all indoor spaces to be their “room.” This is not an obvious concept for our pups.

As you begin potty training, remember:

- ◆ **Every time** you take your puppy out of her “room,” go immediately outside to potty before playing in the house, getting in the car or feeding a meal.
- ◆ Never allow your puppy access to **valuable carpets** until fully potty trained! It is best to roll your rugs up and store them away rather than limit your puppy’s access to your home since to fully socialize your puppy, you need to teach appropriate behavior in all rooms in your home.





- ◆ Dogs do not naturally generalize learning. What they learn in one place does not automatically pertain to other places. So once your puppy is potty trained in your home, you will need to “take it on the road,” introducing other places where **you both** must follow the potty-training rules. See Chapter 4, *Advanced Potty Training* for how to do this.

Five Simple Steps To Potty Training Success

Avidog's Potty Training Solution consists of five simple steps that are repeated until your puppy is accident free when supervised in the house, asks to go outside when she needs to potty and goes as soon as you take her out. Here are the five steps:

- 1) **Confine.** She is confined to her “room” 24/7 when you are not actively watching her.
- 2) **Respond.** You respond immediately when she asks to go outside.
- 3) **Leash and Treats.** You put her on leash, grab her treats, and take her out the same door to the potty area every time.
- 4a) **Reward.** If she potties within 10-15 minutes, she is rewarded with a treat, praise and free time with you, outside or inside.
- 4b) **Back to the Room.** If she does not potty within 10-15 minutes, she goes back in her “room” **no matter what!**
- 5) **Back to the Room Again.** After free time in the house but before she asks to go outside, you put her back in her “room” so you can extend the amount of time between potty trips.

Confinement Is The ONLY Way!

Despite your desire to have your puppy around you a lot, there is one and ONLY ONE way to potty train a dog—**confinement!** You must build on your puppy's desire for cleanliness in his immediate area or “room” and very gradually teach him that all indoor spaces are part of that “room.”

The Human Problem

Alas, many new puppy owners hate the idea of confining their puppy. They love their puppy and do not want her to be unhappy. They also want to enjoy their puppy wherever and whenever they want. It makes them feel good to have the puppy around even though it is not good for the puppy.



But think about it, who would allow a 9-month-old human baby free run of their house if it was not wearing diapers? What parents would not use a bassinette, crib, pack 'n play, playpen, swing or another of the dozens of safe, child-confinement devices that have been invented? Human babies also cry when restrained but we teach them that they will be okay. We can do the same thing with puppies.

The Puppy Problem

To complicate matters, puppies also want to be with their people. Actually, puppies just want to be puppies, doing whatever they want, whenever they want. Unfortunately, puppies, like babies, want to do things that we do not appreciate. To a young (or untrained) puppy, everything in the world is either a potty, a chew toy or food so they are pre-programmed to destroy our homes if they do not get training and guidance.

Luckily, puppies are able to learn a different set of rules if we take the time to teach them. They can learn when and where to potty, which food is theirs, and what items they are allowed to chew on. The easiest time to teach them these rules are from 8 weeks to 9 months of age.

Growing Your Puppy's "Room"

You will start by confining your puppy to his actual sleeping and play area to teach him to be clean there. Then as his physical control and mental understanding grow you will increase his space a little at a time until your entire house falls under his notion of his "room." You will teach him how to communicate with you so he can ask to be taken outside. You will strengthen his muscles so he can hold it between trips outside. Slowly but surely, you then teach him that all indoor areas—friend's homes, the veterinarian's office, dog show sites, pet stores, and more—are all part of his room and thus potty-free zones.

Too Much Freedom Will Result In Failure!

Here is our warning—if like many puppy owners you let your puppy have more space than he is ready for, you will hinder his potty training and instill bad habits early on when they are the most powerful. As a result, you may have to live with his pee and poop all over your house as long as you have him or you may have to make a huge effort to potty train him later in life, when you will be breaking bad habits rather than creating good ones.





It's Your Choice!

If you want a potty-trained dog and clean house, commit now to confining your puppy for the short term, measured in months not years, in order to enjoy him for the long term!

Set Your Expectations

Having a reasonable expectation of what you should expect from your pup will go a long way in your success in his potty training. Although there are anomalies, the vast majority of dogs are not *fully potty trained* until they are *at least six months old*. Most people are sure their dogs are



going to be the exception to the rule, but we can honestly say we have never known a puppy that was **fully** potty trained before six months of age.

This is not because owner and dog are not trying, so why does it take so long? Because a puppy's brain and muscles have to be built up so it can hold urine and feces for many, many hours without having to be emptied.

What Can You Expect Of Your Puppy?

All of this said, the vast majority of our clients' 4- and 5-month-old puppies have learned to:

- ◆ ask to go outside,
- ◆ keep their ex-pens and crates clean, and
- ◆ not pee and poop for four to six hours.

They may not be perfectly reliable in new circumstances, like a hotel room or the in-laws' house, but they know to keep their house clean. They may not be able to go an entire eight-hour workday without pottyting, but they can go at least half a workday.



What You Will Need To Successfully Potty Train Your Puppy

You will need a number of items to successfully potty train your puppy. You may have some on hand and you may be able to borrow others from friends or family. The others are available online and at pet stores. See Chapter 6, *Stuff You Need and Where to Get It*, for a detailed list of specific products and stores that we recommend.

Give Your Puppy A Room (Or Two) Of Her Own

Since potty training takes advantage of your puppy's natural desire to keep her immediate space or living area clean, it requires a small enough space to trigger this desire. We highly recommend that you have at least TWO options for your puppy's room—a crate and an exercise pen (ex-pen) appropriate for her size and breed.

The crate will be used for nighttime potty training and the ex-pen will be used during the day. Your puppy should never be crated for more than 4 hours during the day and 8-9 hours at night. The ex-pen, with a top if your puppy is a jumper, will be your pup's safe playpen during the rest of the time that she is not out with you actively watching her.

As your puppy develops, you may want to invest in some good quality baby gates so you can expand her space elsewhere in the house. It is important that you not confine your puppy in a room by closing the door. No matter how well you have trained your puppy to be relaxed and quiet, a closed door is likely to trigger anxiety, whining, barking and scratching. Baby gates reduce these problems so it is best to get a few.

Clean-Up Supplies

Since your puppy's sense of smell is so much better than yours, and because the smell of urine and feces will draw her to them again and again, indoor cleanup is important.

To completely remove all traces of an accident, use an **enzymatic cleaner**, such as Simple Solution™ or Nature's Miracle™. These products are made to completely remove urine and feces from most surfaces. Be sure to read the instructions because they need to be used properly to work effectively.

Have lots of **paper towel** rolls on hand during this time. Good quality paper towels will make clean up much easier.



Poop bags are important to use whenever you walk your puppy off your property, but they are also helpful for cleanup indoors.

If your puppy has already had a number of accidents in your house, you might want to get a fluorescent **UV (or black) light**. These lights cause organic material to glow so you can see the last remnants of accidents so you can clean them completely.

Outdoor Control

When we think about potty training, we usually think about working with our puppy indoors but what we do outside is very important, too. Using basic tools to control your puppy during outdoor potty training will speed the process immensely.

The key outdoor control tools you will need are a buckle collar, a long leash, a flashlight and a timer (kitchen or smartphone). You probably have these on hand but check Chapter 6 to be sure you have the right type.

Rewards—Treats, Chews And Toys

As obvious as potty training is to us, what we are asking of them is often a mystery to puppies. Rewards help us clarify when they are doing what we want—pottying outside and being calm and relaxed in the crate or pen.



Start with **high-value food rewards** as you begin potty and confinement training with your puppy. Over the next several months, you will most likely be able to reduce the value of the rewards before fading them out completely. However, in these early stages, get the best treats she can imagine to help her understand this important task.

Chew toys will serve a dual purpose in confinement training your puppy. They will keep her happily occupied during periods of confinement while also teaching her the correct things to chew on. Giving chew toys to your puppy while she is in her crate or ex-pen will make being there more enjoyable and help her learn to be quiet and relaxed while confined.