



**OPERATION  
KINDNESS**

# Potty Training

Karen Reese, CPDT-KA, ACDBC, Fear Free Certified Animal Trainer

There are two things every dog needs to know when potty training:

1)Where should I go potty? and 2)When is the next time I will get to go there?

## **Consistency is key!**

When potty training a dog, create a predictable and consistent schedule so that your dog will learn how long they have to hold it until their next potty break. Here is a recommended schedule:

1. First thing in the morning, as soon as the dog wakes up.
2. 10 minutes after they eat their morning meal.
3. A midday break is recommended, especially for young puppies.
4. In the afternoon, at the end of the work or school day.
5. 10 minutes after they eat dinner.
6. Right before going to sleep for the night.

Give your dog a few minutes to relieve themselves. If they don't, take them back inside and place them in an area where you can watch them for any indication that they are preparing to relieve themselves (sniffing the ground, circling, squatting, stopping play to sniff, and running out of sight are some examples of your dog indicating that they need to go potty.) If your dog indicates that they are about to potty, take them back outside and give them another few minutes to try.

When you are potty training your dog you should accompany them anytime they are taken outside to go potty and take treats with you. When your dog relieves themselves in the appropriate area immediately feed them a high value treat. Your treats should be something extra special that they don't get at any other time, bits of chicken or turkey can be extra motivating. Give the treat to them while they are still in the area where they went potty. If you wait to give the treat when you get back inside the dog will not understand that the treat is for going potty outside.

If your dog has an accident in an inappropriate place, such as inside the house, clean the area thoroughly with an enzymatic cleaner made for pet stain removal. Don't scold or punish your dog for accidents. This will most likely lead to the dog hiding from you when they need to eliminate and it will reduce the likelihood that the dog will eliminate in front of you even when they are in an appropriate potty place.

For behavior and training advice, please contact Operation Kindness at [behavior@operationkindness.org](mailto:behavior@operationkindness.org) or visit [www.operationkindness.org/training](http://www.operationkindness.org/training).