

Puppy crate training and bedding

Training a puppy to be content in a crate with soft bedding is a good way to keep them safe and confined during house training and at nights.

Choosing the right crate size

Choose a crate size that will comfortably hold your dog even when they reach adult size (for large breeds this will be quite big!). The crate can then be somewhere that you leave your pup when you are out of the house for short periods.

Away for short periods

Being out of the house for short periods means a few hours. How do you measure that? Rule of thumb during the day is up to the number of hours of the pup's age in months plus one. So you can leave an eight-week-old pup (two months of age) for up to three hours and a 12-week-old pup (three months of age) up to four hours.

Away for longer periods

If you are gone for long periods each day, you will need to provide a larger confinement area, like an exercise pen or small room, supplied with a dog bed and comfortable bedding. Leave a safe puppy chew for entertainment.

If they are only in the one confinement area when you leave, it becomes a social isolation area that they may eventually resist entering. Most puppies quickly accept crate confinement when you make the introduction fun.

Here are some tips:

- Put the crate where people are.
- Associate favourable things with the area – play with them there or spend time reading or watching television nearby as they relax with a favourite chew toy.
- When you pick up toys, store them in the crate so the pup will enter on their own to play.
- Occasionally hide a biscuit in the crate as a surprise.

Separation anxiety is normal

When you leave a puppy alone, they will always have some measure of separation anxiety. This can lead to any behaviour that brings them comfort such as chewing or digging.

With proper crate training when you place them in their crate, they will feel safe because nothing can get to or harm them. They will sleep and chew and wait for you to return. Good luck.