

House Breaking Your Dog in a Weekend

1. Dogs do not want to “go” where they live. Chances are your house is big enough for your dog to go in one room and live in another, so it’s important for you to *have your dog with you at all times the first weekend* you have him (or her) home. Otherwise, he may be living with you in one room and in his mind going “outside” in your living room. It is critical for success that you and your dog are together for 48 hours. If you can devote the first weekend to your new dog, you greatly increase the chances of success.
2. Even if your dog is an adult dog, you’re going to be treating him like he was a 10 week old puppy. Every couple hours, take him outside. If he goes to the bathroom, say “Good Bathroom!” (or whatever you’re going to call it) in a very excited tone and give him a treat. When he goes, you’re going to act like you just won the PowerBall so make this a rewarding experience he won’t forget.
3. Do this often enough and the dog will very quickly learn that going to the bathroom outside is very rewarding, and going anywhere else produces unhappy results.
4. Pay attention to what your dog does before he goes. Some dogs walk in circles. Some dogs sniff around. Some dogs hang around the door. If you notice any of these signals inside the house, you can prevent the accident before it happens.
5. If you are inside and your dog starts to go in front of you, interrupt the behavior by saying loudly “Bathroom Outside!” grab his collar and take him outside quickly.
6. If you must leave him during those first 48 hours, put him in a small area such as a laundry room with his bed, food and water. If he has an “accident” there do not correct him, yell at him, etc. *There is nothing that you can do that will make a dog remember and feel responsible for a past action.*
7. Adult dogs can make it through the night but be sure you take him out just before bed and first thing in the morning. A healthy dog can go 9 hours or so without relieving himself. You should let your dog sleep in your bedroom the first 48 hours because dogs do not want to “go” where they live.
8. If you find that despite doing all of the above your dog is not getting it and if he is an older dog, he may have health issues that you need to look into. Your veterinarian can assist.
9. 48 hours may seem like a long weekend. But remember: dogs repeat only rewarding experiences. He will, eventually, get it.