



## Crate Training

Crate training is not putting your dog/puppy in a "cage" or "jail", and you are not being cruel if you follow these tips. Dogs feel secure in small, enclosed spaces, like a den. Dog crates make excellent dens.

A crate offers your dog security, a den with a roof, and a place to call his very own where he can go to get away from it all. It is also a safe place for him to stay when you're away or when you cannot watch him.

There are basically just a few steps in crate training and they are as follows:

1. Choose a crate the same size as your puppy/dog. He should only have enough room to stand up, turn around and lie down. His crate is for sleeping or for a safe place to be when you cannot be with him. If you have a large breed puppy, you may have to buy two different size crates or purchase a crate with a divider you can move as he grows.
2. Use a single-word command for your dog to enter his crate and throw in a treat or piece of kibble. When he enters, praise him and close the crate door. Gradually increase the time he spends in the crate before you let him out. Remember, your dog still needs time to play and eliminate. Maintain a regular schedule of trips outdoors so as not to confine him too long.
3. As a general guide, your puppy can stay in his crate comfortably for several hours, depending on his age. Take his age in months, add 1, and that's how many hours he should be able to stay in his crate (up to about 8 hours). For example, a 2-month old puppy should be comfortable in his crate for about 3 hours.
4. Providing your dog or puppy with a crate that is way too large may allow him to relieve himself in one end and sleep in the other. Placing food or water in his crate will allow him to fill up his bladder and bowel and he will have no choice but to relieve himself in his crate. Make sure you take your dog or puppy outdoors to eliminate on a regular schedule and especially prior to being left for prolonged periods of time. Always take your dog outside on a leash to the same area in your backyard to eliminate so you can praise him when his job is finished. This will take the guesswork out of his visits to the backyard.

Also, don't forget to play with your dog and exercise him. He needs this kind of stimulation for his mental and physical wellness.