

## **“No, Rover! Not on the Rug!”**

### **How to house train a puppy**

Many books and “dog experts” will tell you that if you want to housetrain your pup quickly you need to use firm discipline! Nothing could be further from the truth! Punishing a pup for going to the bathroom in the house is ineffective and actually counter productive! You will only create a pup who is afraid to go to the bathroom in front of you. The quickest route to a housetrained dog is through consistency, confinement and reward.

#### Consistency

Young puppies need to be fed several times a day. Keeping feedings on a regular schedule can help you predict when your pup will need to go to the bathroom. Puppies need to go to the bathroom frequently. A good rule of thumb is that if your pup is 2 mths old he will need a potty break every two hours - At three mths of age, every three hours and so on. This is only a guide! Puppies are individuals and often activities will increase or decrease your pup's elimination needs. Take your pup out first thing in the morning, after meals, after naps and before bed time.

#### Confinement

Too much freedom spells disaster while housetraining a pup! Your puppy should not be allowed to roam through out your home unsupervised. Use baby gates and a dog crate to safely confine your pup to certain areas. When supervised your pup can be given access to other rooms. If you must leave your puppy alone for longer than he is capable of staying clean he should be left in a small area with newspapers just in case! Never crate a young pup for longer than a couple hours or you will be forcing your puppy to soil where he sleeps!

#### Reward

Lots of praise and treats for puppy when he eliminates outside will build a strong behavior! Dogs learn through repetition. You want to create a lot of repetitions of puppy going to the bathroom outside and being rewarded for it. At the same time you want to avoid allowing many repetitions of puppy going to the bathroom inside. Although you certainly will not be rewarding puppy for eliminating in the house, the relief of emptying his bladder is rewarding in itself.

Your goal when house training your pup is to control his schedule and restrict his freedom so that he is rewarded frequently for eliminating outside. If you find that puppy is having frequent “accidents” take a closer look at your schedule and the amount of supervision your pup is getting.

Note: If you work a full day have a young puppy to house train you will need to make some other arrangements. Consider coming home once or twice during the day or hiring someone to visit your pup at regular intervals. Leaving a pup alone for eight hours a day with newspapers on the floor will not house train him. Remember the act of relieving himself during the day in the house will reward that behavior! Pups who spend too much time alone also do not develop good social skills!