

# How to House Train an Adult Dog

Due to any number of circumstances, a dog may reach adulthood without being house trained.

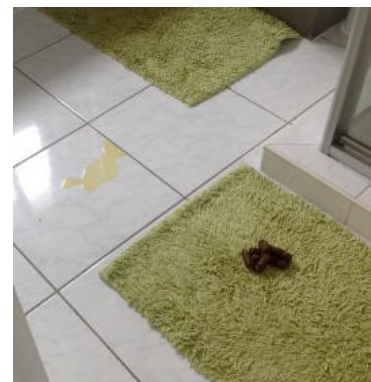
There may be a host of reasons why an adult dog has not previously been potty trained. You may have acquired a dog that has always been kept outside and it doesn't know not to pee and poop in the house. No matter what the reason your adult dog is not currently house trained, your dog is certainly able to be trained in the future with a little time and patience.

To house train or retrain an adult dog is no different to house training a puppy apart for the period of time it will take. It usually takes longer to train an adult dog who may have acquired bad habits over a number of years.

I foster dogs from my local animal shelter while they are awaiting adoption. The house training method below has worked consistently for me over the years. I recently acquired a foster dog named Buddy, a 5-year-old Shih Tzu male who had never been previously house trained.

Buddy (through no fault of his own) had no idea that peeing and pooping in the house was unacceptable behavior. He did what he wanted to do, where and when he wanted.

With time and patience, I was able to successfully house train Buddy within a matter of **5 weeks**. He learned to be totally clean in the house and to do his business outside.



## Let's start with the basics.

- \* A degree of effort is required on your part to house train your adult dog. It's not all easy peasy.
- \* You have to be consistent with your training.
- \* You have to be watchful and aware of what your dog is doing.
- \* Understand that your dog will have many accidents before full house training is achieved.

## First and foremost, have a schedule.

Dogs learn quickly from repetitive actions.

Take your dog outside on a leash once every two hours.

Also, take him out immediately after he has just eaten, and when he wakes from a sleep, and the last thing at night before you go to bed.



Take him to the area where you want him to pee in the future. Stand with him and give him a command. The command can be anything you choose. For example: Pee here, Go Potty, Be a good boy or girl, etc. The actual words are not important but what is important is that you use the **same words every time** you take him outside.

You should make the words you say sound like fun! Like it is a game! Do a pee Buddy... Good Boy... Clever Boy. **Make it sound exciting.**

Dogs learn habits through repetition and reward.

If your dog does not pee or poop outside after three or four minutes take him back inside. Then try again in 20 or 30 minutes.

If your dog **does** actually pee or poop when you take him outside **make a big fuss over him**. Praise him, pat him, play with him.

Often a food treat works well. Let him know that if he goes to the bathroom outside you are very, very pleased with him. Make him feel good about what he has just done.

**Rewarding** your dog with an excited response for a positive outcome will work wonders. This works so much better than scolding him for negative issues.

Dogs do not always think the spot you have chosen for them to pee or poop is the best choice. Often they have their own preferences. A male dog might prefer a tree or post. A female may prefer a grassy area. Sniffing helps stimulate elimination. Allow your dog to have some choice.

### Constant Supervision. Contain your dog to one or two rooms.

Don't let your dog have the run of the house. Try to contain him to the room you spend the most time in so you can watch him most of the time. Close all bedroom doors and barricade other areas that do not have doors.

Baby gates are a useful tool.

Constant supervision is necessary. Watch your dog as much as possible. You need to be very aware of any signs that your dog needs to go to the bathroom.

The 'umbilical method' is another choice. Put the dog on a leash. Put a belt around your waist and attach the dog. Your dog is now in the position of having to be with you at all times and you can have constant supervision of him at all times.



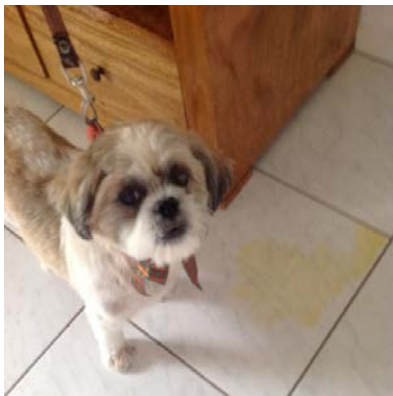
The baby gate was accidentally left open and Buddy is on the wrong side of it. Keep baby gates closed.

### When your dog has an accident in the house.

Accept some of the blame yourself, perhaps you could have been watching him better. **Never get angry.**

Praising your dog for doing the right thing will always work far better than punishing him for doing the wrong thing. Don't get angry. Don't go overboard by yelling and screaming.

If you find the mess or puddle after the event has happened **do not rub his nose in it.** This is not acceptable and is an old-fashioned idea that doesn't work. This only serves to make him **afraid of you** and confuses him.



**However**, you must let him know that this is unacceptable behavior.

Put your dog on his leash and take him to the puddle or mess. Adopt a 'not happy voice' and say,

"I'm not happy with this" while pointing to the puddle or poop.

Try to make him *look* at the 'accident'. It is very likely that your dog will not want to look at what you are pointing to and he will avert his eyes from what you are showing him.

Hold him there and tell him several times in a 'not happy voice', NO! Not Good! He will feel uncomfortable when you do this and this is what you want to achieve.

Use towels or tissues to pick up the poop or blot the urine and take it outside and put it where you would have liked him to do it in the first place.

Make sure you still have him on the leash and that he accompanies you and watches every step of the procedure.

Put the tissue on the ground outside and then tell your dog in a happy voice: 'Good place... do pee here... very good place or words to that effect.

Make it exciting.

