



## House Training Your New Pup

*Most shelter dogs are not yet accustomed to living in a home, so will need to learn not to go potty indoors. Housetraining a dog starting with a schedule of walking them approximately every 2 hours is a practical and effective approach, especially for puppies or newly adopted dogs. Remember that consistency and routine is key, and it may take a few weeks or months, depending on your new pup's age and temperament. Here's a step-by-step guide to get started:*

**Preparation:** Gather essential supplies, including a leash, poop bags, treats, and a timer or alarm to remind you when it's time to take your dog out.

**Create a Designated Bathroom Area:** Decide on a specific spot in your yard or outside your home where you want your dog to eliminate. Consistency is key.

**Set a Strict Schedule:** Begin by taking your dog outside every two hours. You can set an alarm or a timer to help you remember. Also take them out just after they wake up, after drinking a lot of water, and after their meals. As you get to know them better, you will also learn to recognize signs they may need to go such as beginning to sniff around the ground.

**Supervise Indoors:** When your dog is inside between bathroom breaks, keep a close eye on them. Use baby gates or a crate to restrict their access to other parts of the house until they become solid in going potty outside. Dogs prefer not to go potty in their resting space, so once they begin to eliminate somewhere separate they will begin to prefer that.

**Watch for Signs:** Pay attention to your dog's behavior. Sniffing, circling, or whining are often signs that they need to go outside.

**Use a Leash:** When it's time for a bathroom break, leash your dog and guide them to the designated area. This helps them stay focused on the task at hand.

**Use a Command:** Use a consistent command like "Go potty" or "Do your business" every time you take your dog out.

**Reward and (LOTS OF) Praise:** When your dog eliminates in the designated area, praise them, and offer a treat as a reward. Positive reinforcement is essential. Don't wait until you get inside to reward them- reward them as soon as they eliminate so that they start to build a direct positive association with going potty outside.

**Stay Outside Until They Go:** Be patient. Some dogs may take a little while to go, so give them time. Avoid bringing them back inside until they've done their business. If they haven't gone to



the bathroom, bring them back inside to a supervised area to make sure they don't try to go upon getting back inside.

**Adjust the Schedule:** As your dog becomes more reliable and can hold it for longer, gradually increase the time between bathroom breaks. This adjustment varies from dog to dog.

**Be Patient:** Housetraining takes time, and accidents are normal. Do not punish your dog for an accident. This will confuse them and is not actually helpful to building any positive associations for going outside. If your dog has an accident, clean the area thoroughly to remove the smell, as dogs are drawn to areas that smell like their waste. Enzymatic cleaners such as Nature's Miracle are key to this- enzymatic cleaners eliminate the enzymes that dogs can still smell, even when we can't! Using a regular disinfectant such as Lysol will not eliminate these enzymes and your dog will still sense that area as a bathroom spot.

**Nighttime Routine:** At night, continue the schedule. You may increase length of time between breaks, but expect to take your dog out at least once in the middle of the night, especially if you have a young puppy. Crating them at night is often helpful to getting them in a nighttime routine and discouraging soiling in between potty breaks. If your dog shows stress in the crate, please see our crate training sheet to begin working on it!

**Gradual Freedom:** As your dog becomes more reliable with housetraining, you can gradually increase their freedom inside the house, one room at a time.

**Remember: Consistency is Key!** Stick to the routine. Consistency is vital in reinforcing good housetraining habits. Remember that patience, consistency, and positive reinforcement are essential in housetraining a dog. Over time, your dog will develop good habits and understand where they should eliminate. It's crucial to celebrate their successes and avoid punishment for accidents. Every dog is unique, so be prepared for housetraining to take a few weeks to a few months, depending on your dog's age and temperament.