

Crate Soiling

Crate soiling can be a real challenge for many new puppy parents. Know you are not alone and we are here to help you. Crate soiling can happen for many reasons. For example, your puppy may have been forced to live in the crate full-time prior to arriving at your home. In this situation, he has never had a choice on where to eliminate. As a result, he now may have a preference to eliminate in his crate. Among other reasons for crate soiling are the following (ask to see the Crate Training handout for more details):

- ***Your puppy's crate may be too large.***

This can be easily addressed by getting a smaller crate that allows your puppy only enough room to stand up, turn around, and lie down comfortably. Alternatively, you may reduce the size of your large crate by placing a space-occupying object, such as a piece of wood, cardboard, or other material, in the crate. There are crates on the market today that have a wire wall that can be adjusted to fit your puppy's size. As your puppy grows, you must move the wire barrier frequently to accommodate his increasing size.

Another option you can choose is to create an elimination area in the larger crate. This can be accomplished by placing a wee-wee pad in a doggie litter box. Place the litter box at one end of the crate and give him sleeping quarters at the other end of the crate. This will allow your puppy to eliminate in one area and sleep in the other, making clean-up much easier.

- ***You forgot to let your puppy eliminate before placing him in the crate.***

- ***You left the puppy in the crate too long.***

Puppies can wait for only short periods of time before needing to eliminate. If your work schedule prevents you from letting your puppy out of the crate sooner, consider a pet sitter or dog day care.

Once you have adjusted the puppy's crate for his size, tried getting a pet sitter to let him out in the middle of the day, and even tried dog day care, then here is your last step for working on this problem. Keep him in his crate while watching him. Every time the puppy seems to be sniffing the floor in his crate, looking for a place to go, or circling in his crate, and he has been in his crate for more than three or four hours, he may need to relieve himself. Take him outside to the designated area, stand there, and wait. The minute he eliminates, mark and reward him right there with a very special treat he only gets when he relieves himself outside or in the designated area inside. Over time, he will become conditioned to want to go outside so he can get one of those special treats.

This can be a challenging behaviour to deal with, but with **time**, **patience**, and training **consistency**, your puppy will learn not to soil in his crate.



If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us