

Crate Training a Puppy

BEHAVIOR SERIES



Creating a secure, safe sanctuary for your puppy is important. If introduced and used properly, crates can be this sanctuary for your dog. Below are some tips for crate training your puppy.

Things to do:

- Acquire the proper crate
 - Your dog should be able to comfortably stand, turn around and lie down
 - Keep in mind that as puppies grow, their need for space will as well; purchase a crate that will fit your full-grown dog
- Place a blanket or towel in the crate
 - If puppy chews/consumes the bedding then remove bedding from crate
- Locate the crate in a part of the home where the family spends time, such as kitchen, family room or bedroom
- Initially keep the door to the crate open and place treats/toys/meals in crate to encourage your puppy to enter it voluntarily; praise your puppy when s/he enters voluntarily
- Once the puppy is comfortable entering the crate voluntarily, start with short confinement sessions
 - The first confinement sessions should be after a period of play, exercise and elimination
 - Start with a 5-minute confinement session
 - Place your puppy in the crate with a favored toy/treat and close the door; stay in the room with your crated puppy
 - A few whines/cries or barks are normal and should be ignored
 - After 5 minutes, open the crate door
 - With success, gradually extend the time that your puppy is confined in the crate and your distance from the crate

Things to avoid:

- Pushing, pulling or forcing your puppy into the crate
- Using the crate for punishment; however the crate can be used as a management strategy to avoid potential problems
- Bad experiences in the crate: incessant barking/whining/crying accompanied by other signs of distress (panting, chewing, etc.) indicate a very distressed animal and the puppy should be removed from the crate
- Praising or rewarding the puppy when you let him/her out of the crate
- Using the crate as an excuse for not exercising/playing with your puppy
- Long periods of confinement in the crate



For additional information, please contact your Banfield medical team.

