

Puppy Proofing Your Home / Crate Training Continued from page 4

are not designed to be attacked by sharp little teeth; they may easily disintegrate.

- Although it sounds like a cute idea, don't let puppies play with old shoes. The shoes may contain small parts that could be harmful if swallowed, and chewing on shoes can become a life-long bad habit, since dogs don't differentiate between old and new shoes.

Crate Training

- Crate training is the most effective and humane way to house train a pup.
- Get your puppy comfortable with a crate by first giving it a treat in the crate, then advance to feeding in the crate until it is happy about being in its crate.
 - Gradually extend the amount of time your pup spends in the crate.
 - When you let your pup out, use praise for the pup being good in the crate.
 - Be consistent and keep your pup on a regular schedule.
 - Never use a crate for punishment – the crate should be a safe and happy place.

There are a lot of misconceptions about Crate Training. First of all, all dogs are DEN animals. That means that in the wild, dogs seek out den type homes to snooze in, breed in, hide in and just hang out. They like dens. Terriers in particular adore small cozy dens.

Our Boykins race for the smallest of the crates, cram themselves into boxes two sizes too small, hunker under low furniture, etc. Where we would be claustrophobic; they are rather pleased with themselves in being first to get in the smallest space possible.

Crates are the human imitation of the den. It is a safe place for the dogs to hang out if they prefer. It is a safe place at night for them to sleep in. It is a safe place for a younger dog to snooze in if the family has to run to the grocery store.

What a crate is NOT:

- It is NOT a place of punishment if they do something wrong.
- It is NOT a jail cell for solitary confinement while the owners go off to work during the day.

We have crates. All our puppies are raised in an enormous crate in our Home from the time they begin to wobble around on their legs. It keeps them safe. It makes it very easy to keep them clean and we can supervise them

constantly. As soon as they can wobble pretty well, they are outside in the grass with someone watching them. Soon, they each have their own crate and only sleep in the crate. If they are awake, they are outside, learning about playing and more types of human/dog social interaction.



There is a reason that puppies must be raised in an environment as similar as possible to a real den. Dogs will do anything not to soil their dens. Puppies learn this very early on. It is a part of their dog psychology. By raising them in a crate/den like environment and taking them outside as often as possible, they learn to contain their body functions in order to keep their den clean. If a breeder takes advantage of this inherent part of the puppy's psychology, then they will have a very easy time of house training the puppies.

All our puppies are or will be crate trained. They will do anything to keep it clean. However, we must do my part. Our puppies are on a regular schedule so that everyone knows what to expect. We feed them at set times because food stimulates the movement of the bowels within 5 to 50 minutes depending on the pup and its age. As soon as they have finished eating, they are carried outside and encouraged to do their "business". They are taken out last thing at night and at the crack of dawn in the morning and a few times during the day. When we had carpet, we would carry the puppies because at this young age carpet and flooring are indistinguishable from dirt and grass to them. They may not differentiate between them until they are about 12 weeks old. In order to avoid potty training problems in the future, we do not let any bad habits start. By the time they are 12 weeks old, it is possible to extend that sense of "den" to include the entire house, little by little, room by room.

That is also why we refuse to use newspapers. Why start training them with something that will have to be unlearned later on? Will the puppy

always have a slight hesitation in using the Sunday newspaper left lying around in the future? Better to never start that habit.

To Repeat:

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More Testimony

Just when you thought the puppy stage was about over and you no longer had to be concerned about puppy proofing or keeping your eye on them every second of every minute... something happens.

Below is a photo of what had to be surgically removed from one puppy. This is only half of what the pup ate as it threw up a piece equally as large. The owners of this pup are the best and had fully puppy proofed their home, but in the blink of an eye their puppy had eaten the two tips of a robe belt which hangs in the back of their closet. The pup ate these in only a minute or so when they had their eyes off her.



We have been lucky so far as we have had many near misses but not yet had to resort to surgery for this type of incident. We hope you remain as lucky and as watchful.

**- Greg Copeland
Texas Trace Kennels**

Healthwise

AKC Tips for Pet Owners During the Holiday & Summer Heat

Summertime Tips from AKC

As we head into the warmest month of the summer, the AKC offers the following tips for keeping your canines cool:

4th of July Tips

- It's a bad idea to take your dog to firework shows because they can startle at the loud noise and escape or injure themselves.

- If you can hear fireworks from your home and your dog is getting scared, put your dog in a room where he is comfortable. If he is crate trained, a crate is a great secure area to keep him.

Out and About

- Most importantly, make sure your dog has access to plenty of cool, fresh water 24 hours a day. There are many inexpensive and collapsible bowls that you can take with you anywhere and refill at water fountains. If you are going to be out for a long period of time, freeze a bottle of water or bring ice cubes in a Tupperware container so you have cold water when you reach your destination.

- Be aware that asphalt can quickly get hot enough to burn the pads of your dog's paws. Your dog's entire body is much closer to the ground than yours. Try to walk your dog on the grass or dirt where it is cooler to keep them more comfortable.

- Never leave your dog in a vehicle. When it's only 80 degrees outside, a car can heat up to over 120 degrees in just minutes and leaving a window open does little to prevent heat build-up. Many vets say that this is the most common cause of heat exhaustion.

- Tying a dog outside a store while you run an errand is never a good idea, but is especially dangerous in the summer since he may be exposed to direct sunlight. If you cannot bring your dog inside the store, it's best to leave him home.

- Avoid strenuous exercise on extremely hot days. Take walks in the early mornings or evenings when the heat and humidity is less intense.

Remember that if your dog is spending most of its time in air conditioning; the impact of the heat will be even stronger on them.

- Many dogs like swimming to keep their body temperature down on the warmest days. Plastic baby pools work great because it gives your dog the option of just getting their toes wet or getting drenched from head to toe. Make sure you change the water on a daily basis to keep the water cool and clean.

- Many dogs like swimming, but some cannot swim or may not like the water. Be conscious of your dog's preferences and skills before putting him in the water. Always supervise your pet while swimming. Dogs can become easily disoriented in swimming pools and may not be able to find the stairs.

- Chlorine from pools and bacteria from streams, lakes and ponds can be toxic for a dog's system. Always rinse your dog with clean water after swimming and never let her drink water from these sources.

Cool Ideas

- If you keep your dogs outside, it's critical that they have access to shade, and remember that dark colored dogs absorb more heat than dog with lighter colored coats. Doghouses are not good shelters during the summer as they can trap heat.

- Dogs are outdoors more often during the summer, interacting with

nature and other animals. Summer months are also prime time for ticks, fleas and mosquitoes, so make sure your dog's vaccinations are up to date and that you are treating them with monthly preventatives.

- There are various products that can help keep pets cool, such as fans that clip onto crates and mats with cooling crystals that stay up to 20 degrees below room temperature. These can be used as crate liners or as beds. Collars, vests and other items are also available. For an immediate and inexpensive option, try placing your dog on a wet towel on a concrete or tile floor in front of a fan or air conditioner.

- Dogs do not sweat and their only means of reducing body heat is by panting. If you have a long-haired dog, consider keeping him trimmed during the summer months. But don't cut it too short or shave the dog-- his coat protects him from sunburn!

Heat Exhaustion 101

- There are many factors which can make a dog more susceptible to heat exhaustion; physical condition, age, its coat type, breed and the climate it is most acclimated to. Very young and very old dogs are at the most risk. Short-nosed breeds such as Pugs and Bulldogs are also at greater risk.

- Symptoms of heat exhaustion or stroke can include excessive panting, disorientation and obvious paleness or graying to the gums due to a lack of oxygen. A dog's natural 102 degree body temperature should never exceed 105 degrees.

- If you feel your dog is suffering from heat exhaustion or heat stroke, act immediately by submerging her in cool water (not ice cold) or by placing ice packs on her neck. Once the dog has been stabilized get her to a vet.

