

Practicing Crate Training (bulleted points are from Purina website)

- Introduce your pup to the crate in a low-pressure situation, not when you're about to leave. Toss in a treat or kibble and praise the puppy when he enters the crate. Keep the door open so he can move around and explore.
- Remove his collar before you put him in the crate. You don't want him getting stuck on anything, especially if you have a metal crate.
- Put a treat in the crate and use a simple word like "kennel" to get him used to the command.
- For some positive association, try feeding your puppy in the crate.
- Slowly increase the time your puppy spends in the crate with the door closed. Start by closing it for only a few moments and then work your way up. Make sure to praise him while the door is closed.
- Don't open the door if he starts to whine. That will only teach him that when he whines he gets out of the crate.
- The rule of thumb for determining the length of time your puppy can stay in the crate is one hour per month of age, plus one hour. So, if your puppy is 5 months old, he can stay in for 6 hours.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** No matter his age, do NOT leave him in his crate for more than 8 hours. It's unfair to leave him in for that long without letting him exercise or relieve himself.
- **BE CONSIDERATE, BE KIND:** Remember, the longer he is confined the more exercise he'll need. So never use it as a way to avoid spending time with your puppy.

Amy's advice on crate training for new PWD parents

How to ease your dog into crate training.

Your breeder has done their best to introduce your puppy to the crate. Many times in a large litter it is more difficult to give each puppy individual crate time. We try to use the crate with them during puppy pen cleaning and attaching a crate to the pen so they can go in and out and not find it scary. Also crate training in larger litters is often done 2 pups at a time as well just based on the amount of crates needed. Your puppy will need to continue working on being solo for often the first time.

The number one rule of crate training is to make the crate a nice place to be. I recommend putting in their blanket they came home with, taking OFF their collar and giving them something in their crate to keep them busy. Start slow. Feed them in their crate so they begin to associate it with something positive. Begin by putting your puppy in the crate for short periods of time. Do not let them out when they whine initially. Stay close by and as soon as the whining stops reward them with being let out. If whining does not stop do NOT let the pup get super anxious and carry on. I would suggest taking the puppy out of the crate and immediately outside to potty just in case that is why they are whining. Once they come back in from potty return them to the crate for 5 minutes, toss some treats into the crate and close the door. Praise them for behaving in the crate then let them out. Increase the time spent in the crate throughout the day. Doing this throughout the day will increase your chance at success through the night.

Another option some families do is attaching a pen to the sides of the crate. This is a great way to give the puppy time outs during the day and get used to the crate without being locked in right away. This is best to do in a high traffic area in the home so when the pup does need to be put into this area they do not feel alone or abandoned. If you are using an area set up like this you still put them in their crate throughout the day to get used to it. I also would still crate them when you leave home in case you have a climber who will find their way out while you are away. I will post a few photos of what this pen can look like. If you are interested in something like this but are not sure where to order it from I have a link to Amazon I can send you.

The first night home in their crate can be tough for both puppy and the new family. They are unsure of where they are, not settled in yet and are in this strange area they are not familiar with and now in a crate too. You may want to start with stuffing a Kong toy with peanut butter and treats and putting one in the

crate. Sit near the crate while your puppy chews on the Kong. Let the puppy enjoy the treat before you ask them to go to bed.

I recommend crating the puppy in your bedroom, if possible, as they do not feel alone and left/abandoned in this new environment. You are likely to soothe the puppy by being near them. I also do a few other things to help soothe puppies crating alone – turn on a radio to play soothing music or use your Amazon Alexa and play songs by Sarah McLachlan, Nora Jones, Enya or Kenny G – these seem to be very soothing to the pups and they have heard them before at our home. This can be calming to the puppy. You can also try a heartbeat puppy toy that can help them not feel alone as well. I also have covered the crate completely with a blanket or sheet. In desperate times I have slept with the crate right next to my bed with my hand hanging in the crate to soothe the puppy.

One of the biggest keys to success is consistency and not running to the pup who is whining to rescue them after 10 minutes – that same pup will cry 11 minutes next time or whatever it takes to get you to appear again – they are very good at telling time and trying to train you to get what they want LOL. Now if your puppy is crying hard to 10 minutes and getting hysterical (they are good at this) I suggest going to the pup in a robotic and non-emotional way removing them from the crate, take them directly outside, use your potty key word, wait for them to do their business – I would not talk to them, nothing sweet or happy and in an excited voice. Once they have pottied return them to their crate. This will teach them that when they whine in the crate they get let out to use the bathroom not to play or go lay in your bed (tee hee hee).

Highlighted Tips:

Make sure to keep all crate experiences positive.

Feed your puppy in their crate.

Toss treats into the crate to encourage the pup to go in and out for something positive.

Be extra-boring while you do this, so your puppy learns that crying gets her a potty break, not playtime or snuggles. Then give her a different toy and put her back in the crate.

Putting your crate in your room overnight can be hugely helpful in helping puppies settle into their new crate-trained life. If you're having trouble, try relocating the crate.

Lastly, it's much easier to introduce your puppy to the crate while you're home and awake, rather than overnight or right before you go to work.

If possible, it's really best to try to take some serious time off when bringing home a new puppy. Not to mention you want to capitalize on some quality bonding!

If taking time off isn't possible, see about working from home for a couple of weeks. Crate training your pup without you being home and awake isn't impossible, but it's definitely a lot tougher.