

## **10 / 3 Rule of House Training**

**By Susan Carney**

### **Pick a spot**

Pick a “potty” spot for your dog to “go” in. When you have house training problems the best thing to do is be clear, consistent and have strong rules. This spot is where you will take your dog before you do ANYTHING else (once outside). No walking, no playing, no freedom, no treats.

### **Establish a routine**

Every one likes patterns and let’s face it habits, rituals or routines are easy to establish. Both man and canine are routine orientated.

Here is a great example of a routine that is easy to follow:

Let’s say its 6 am and you are just taking your puppy or dog out;

Go to your potty spot and stand still or limit your walking to small circles. Wait 10 minutes. Do not go for a walk, pat, play, feed or pay attention to your pup.

If s/he does not go then, go back inside and place him/her in the crate. Wait 3 minutes

Then Back outside to the potty spot. 10 minutes.

If s/he does not go then - again - back inside and in the crate for 3 minutes.

If s/he DOES go; Go for a walk, give a pat and a treat or play for a bit as a reward. Go back inside and give her freedom, breakfast, and love.

Your dog holds dear the very things you can use to train her.

- ✓ Love
- ✓ Food
- ✓ Attention
- ✓ Toys
- ✓ Freedom
- ✓ Praise

So use these to get what you want by WITHOLDING them (or one of them) until you get what you want.

If your dog is already roaming freely in your home – and not house trained – its time to change that too. Puppies or new dogs that are not housetrained are telling you that they cannot handle being free around the house so do not do it. Get a baby gate or stack two baby gates up in a door way and limit your dog to 1 or 2 rooms in the house.



Your dog is pooping/peeing in your house so remove the privilege of running free (inside). You can give it back later.

**Now, let us say its 2pm and time for a walk...**

Repeat the routine above even though it is the middle of the day. Leash your dog up, go to the potty spot and stand still or limit your walking to small circles. Wait 10 minutes. Do not go for a walk, pat, play, feed or pay attention to your dog/pup.

If your dog does not go then take it back inside and place him/her in the crate. Wait 3 minutes. Yes, even though your dog was already free in the house, s/he goes back into the crate. Freedom is removed because the dog did not go.

Wait 3 minutes, and then Back outside to the potty spot. Wait 10 minutes.

Repeat.

Once your dog goes, then go for a walk; pat him/her, praise and even a treat as a reward. Go back inside and give back the freedom you took away.

In addition, when your dog is physically in the position “going,” say the cue or command you want to use to get them to go in the future. “Do your business,” “Potty time,” “Hurry up.” Adding the command while the action is taking place helps your dog learn and relate the command faster than saying 27 times before they have actually gone.

**Any time you offer the opportunity to "GO" you must then take away freedom and attention if your dog DOES NOT GO."**

**Confinement**

If a dog is not fully housetrained then freedom in and around the house must be limited. You cannot watch them all the time and they will always find a spot to go if the communication and routine are not clear. Crate your dog when alone and use baby gates to limit the dog when you are home. If your house is open and gates are not an option then keep your dog with you on leash until the behavior is better. We have a great handout on crate training.

**Accidents and punishment**

**GOTCHA!** If you catch the dog in the act, a deep firm “Hey” is all that is needed to communicate your displeasure, distract your dog and get them outside to finish.

Upon finding an accident, many a dog owner will grab the dog, drag it back to the scene of the crime, point at the mess and even worse, push the dog’s face in its excrement and yell. The dog will cower, lower his eyes, layback his ears and maybe even yelp. Ask yourself, what message are you really sending to your dog?



Dogs are not human and do not have the same body language or verbal skills that we do. Owners think a dog understands what you are doing and relating it to the poop, you have just smeared all over their face. Well it does not. Dogs react, learn and observe in the here and NOW... Your posture, loud voice and grabbing the dog tells the dog one thing and one thing only...YOUR angry, AT HIM...and when your angry you smear poop on faces. Your dog is left wondering, "What's his problem?"

The reason you are angry goes completely misunderstood by your dog. A poop that was done 4 hours ago is not and cannot be related (by a dog) to your anger right now.

Dogs are simple and may even be thinking: Could it be that you want the poop on the living room carpet not the hall carpet or maybe its just when you are home that pooping is bad....should I wait until you are gone? Moreover, certainly if you are going to rub my face in it...I am going to hide it or just not come when you call me – ever!

**CLEAN UP!** Clean up all accidents with a commercial odor neutralizer. We highly recommend \*Natures Miracle and sell it at the NHSPCA. This type of product, readily available in pet supply stores, breaks down (using enzymes or bacteria) the organic matter that causes the odor. Cleaning up with ammonia or pine based cleansers will not neutralize the odor. If there is any residual odor left after cleaning, chances are good that the dog will return to the spot.

### **“Going” on command**

If you want your dog to “go” on command then it is up to you to decide what the command is and what you want your dog to do. It is NOT up to your dog.

Pick a command or cue that you want to use “Hurry up,” “do your business,” or “Potty time.”

The words do not matter but how you use them does. Be consistent and be happy about it when your dog gets it right.

Add the cue when your dog is actually (physically) in the position to poop or pee. Label the behavior with “Hurry up, Good hurry up.” Each and every time they “go.”

Labeling the behavior as it is happening is the easiest, most efficient way for a dog to learn. Do your best to avoid saying “Hurry up” “Hurry Up” “Hurry up” – 17 times before your dog goes... s/he will just tune you out.

Say your cue ever time your dog physically goes, every time you attach the leash at the door and every time your dog comes over to you in the house and looks at you funny. The dog will very quickly turn the tables on you and start coming to you – trying to get you to say that word or words so they can go out. It is that simple.



As with any behavior there can always be underlying reasons why training does not work, every dog is different and if you are having difficulty, you should seek professional help. Call us at 603-772-2921 Ext. 112 for assistance.

