

**Valley Lakes Veterinary Clinic
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All About Crate Training

Why?

- Helps with potty training
- Allows safe place for pup when unable to be supervised
- Provides secure “den” for pup

What size?

- Once the puppy is fully grown, he/she should have a crate large enough to be able to stand and turn around in comfortably.
- For the pup, sizing it so the pup can only lie down and turn around is ideal to help with potty training. Dividers can be used to allow the crate to be the appropriate size.

What kind?

- The metal crate or the plastic traveling crate is a matter of preference. The metal crates can be covered with a blanket to create more of a “den”. Beware that some pups may pull the blanket inside the crate and chew/shred/eat the blanket.

Where to place it?

- Near the door that he/she will use to go outside.
- Not in direct sunlight.
- Away from high traffic areas, for peace and quiet.
- Not tucked in an isolated part of the home, pups are social creatures.

When to use the crate?

- When pup needs to rest
- At night
- The pup should be left in the crate for short periods when people are home to prevent anxiety when the pup will be left alone for a short time.
- When no one is able to watch the puppy (i.e. cooking/eating dinner, watching TV)

How long can the puppy be in the crate?

- A good rule of thumb is: Take the pup’s age and add 1= the number of hours the pup can be expected to “hold it” at night. (ex. The pup is 12 weeks which is 3 months, plus 1= 4 hours during the day the puppy should be able to hold it, not any longer)

What to put in the crate and what NOT to put in the crate

- Chew toys/Kong
- NOT food or water (this sets the puppy up to fail for potty training)
- NOT blankets (deters potty training and they could chew)
- NOT collars (could get caught)

What to do if the puppy barks/whines while in the crate

- If the puppy has just been outside and doesn’t have to go to the bathroom, ignore him/her. Going to the crate and letting him/her out reinforces that behavior. Barking/whining=getting out! Most pups will settle down after a few minutes in the crate. Before going in the crate, it will help if the pup is tired. This is a great time to have play time with your pup.