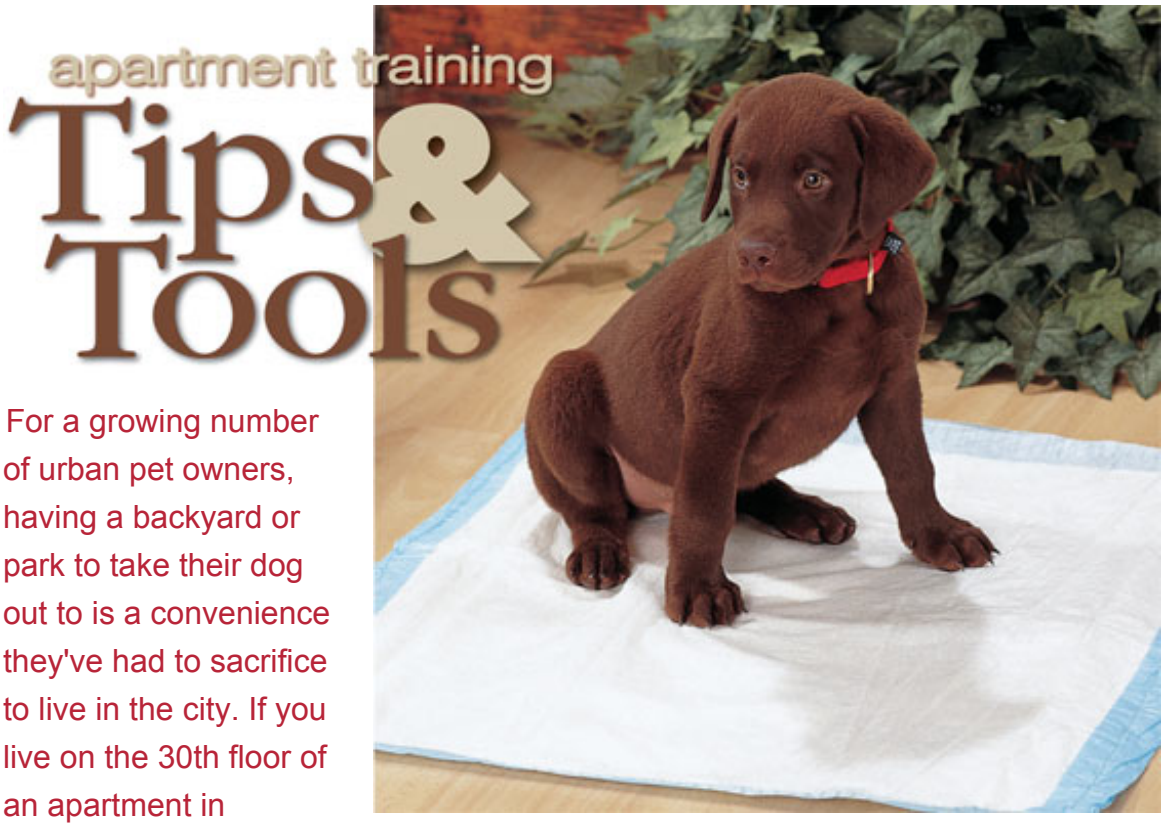
Housetraining Indoor City Dogs

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



For a growing number of urban pet owners, having a backyard or park to take their dog out to is a convenience they've had to sacrifice to live in the city. If you live on the 30th floor of an apartment in downtown New York, indoor housetraining - teaching your pet to use papers or a litter box - may be your only option. It also may be the best option if you are advanced in age, handicapped, or work very long hours.

Luckily, most indoor dogs can be housetrained fairly easily, especially if you start early with the new tools available for dogs requiring indoor "facilities." Indoor training requires the same rigid adherence to a schedule as outdoor training; the only difference is that you will be placing your pet on training pads or newspaper instead of taking her outdoors.

Tips

First, select a corner away from your pet's eating and sleeping area that will be easy to clean up in case her aim is a little off. The location should always remain the same. At first, cover a larger area than is actually needed - about 3-4 square feet - with training pads. You can reduce the area as training progresses. Take your puppy there after each meal or drink of water, after each nap and exercise time, whenever she looks agitated or starts sniffing the floor, or circling, and always before bed.

Use verbal commands (like "do your business") and praise enthusiastically when she eliminates in her area. If you catch her voiding out of her corner, pick her up and take her back there. Correct with a firm voice - never a hand - and don't rub her nose in it. With positive reinforcement and a strict schedule, she will soon be walking to her area on her own.

Owners that attempt indoor housetraining should be aware of some potential problems. It will take longer than outdoor training. Some dogs will resist and may not be able to be trained to go indoors. And once a dog learns to go indoors, it can be difficult to train them to go outdoors in the future.

Tools

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- Drs. Foster & Smith Piddle Pads® or similar products actually contain attractants so your dog will seek out the pad when she needs to go. No-leak undersides mean no floor clean up. When used with the polypropylene Protection Tray the pads are less apt to slide around, especially if you have a larger dog or active puppy.

  If your puppy has constant access to Piddle Pads®, she may not understand what they are for. Designate only one site in the house as the elimination site, and place the pads there. Somewhat restrict her access to them so she can learn she only goes to them for a special reason. She should be taken to the pads when she would normally eliminate.

  It may help to confine her in a small enough area so she is unlikely to eliminate there for a period of time. Then bring her, on leash, to the area you have designated as the elimination site. Wait until she eliminates, and praise and reward her with treats for eliminating in the correct place. If you see your puppy urinating somewhere else, startle her and take her to the elimination site. If you are unable to keep an eye on her, confine her to a small area where she will not eliminate until she is fully trained.

  Also, don't try to housetrain both inside and outside - it can be too confusing for puppies.
- If you choose traditional paper training, consider using a spray-on attractant that works in the same fashion as the Piddle Pads®.

And don't forget to get some urine/stool neutralizer for the occasional accident. Drs. Foster & Smith CleanAway eliminate odors with special enzymes so your dog is discouraged from soiling the area again.

Recommended Housetraining Products

Piddle Pads®

Piddle Pad® Tray

Pet Organics No-Go!

OdorLogic® CleanAway

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