

Bladder Control Issues

How Often Should a Puppy Pee

Young puppies will usually need to void their bladder within 10 to 30 minutes of filling up their tanks. In general, young puppies (less than about 3 months old) should be taken out once every hour. You can gradually build up until pups under 5 months old may be taken out every 2 hours. Pups over 6 months old should not be asked to retain urine for longer than 4 hours at a time during active hours. Every puppy is different. Their ability to hold urine can vary from the norm without it being a health issue. Puppies have small bladders, meaning the concentration of urine in the kidneys is developing as their bodies mature.

Signs of Bladder Control Issues

- Involuntary urination
- Wet spots in bedding or sleeping area
- Wet hair on lower abdomen or between the legs
- Licking and skin inflammation around the genitals
- Frequent urinary tract infections

Medical reasons for urinary issues

- Urinary tract infection:** infection of the lower urinary tract; symptoms include dark urine, blood in urine, straining to urinate and/or frequent urination with only a few drops each time.
- Overactive bladder syndrome:** frequent urination caused by poor nerves and muscles around the bladder and urethra; symptoms include sudden urge to urinate and incontinence
- Kidney or bladder stones:** build up of minerals and salts from the kidneys; symptoms include sharp pains in the abdomen, dark urine and frequent urge to urinate

Behavioural reasons for urinary issues:

If pup can hold their toileting overnight, then we may be looking at a behavioural problem.

Incomplete Training

Puppies don't know when they are and are not allowed to go potty right off the bat — it's your job to help them develop those skills. The trick with house training is to get the puppy to the right place (outside) at the right time (when they actually have to go). The first step is to develop consistent, firm training methods including those relative to bathroom time. This means taking pup out on a regular schedule (including anytime he drinks water) and providing plenty of praise and affection when he goes in the right place. Also remember that puppies don't have complete control of their bladders when less than a few months old. Sometimes, they don't understand that they need to go until the urge strikes them. Before they know it, they're sprinkling on the carpet. Patience is an essential skill for any puppy foster! It also takes time for puppies to learn how to manage their bladders. Anyone who's walked an adult dog knows that they often release a lot of urine when they first go outside, but they'll also pee a little in a dozen more places over the course of the walk. They'll eventually empty their bladders more-or-less completely, but they keep a little in reserve for marking purposes. Little puppies simply can't control their bladders this well, so it takes them a while to figure all of these things out.

Attention-Seeking Behavior

If a puppy likes to be outside or engage with you, they can start to pair asking to go outside with their preferred activities. They may use strategies that work to go outside or get your attention even if they don't have to toilet. Things like repeatedly knocking bells on doors or crying in the night, can become habits that predict going outside and human engagement. This results in misunderstandings because the person thinks the pup needs to toilet but the puppy simply wants to go outside or play with their human. Puppy may then toilet when he comes inside because he just doesn't understand yet that toileting happens outside. Ask your puppy rep if you think these misunderstandings may be delaying your housetraining routine.

Excitement

Many dogs pee whenever they get excited. For excitement peeing, toilet the dog before a potentially interesting activity. Keep interactions with the pup low key. Use a calm voice and hands. Do not use a high-pitched voice or bouncy gestures. Crate the puppy if necessary until they can contain themselves. Introduce the puppy to lots of new situations but control their excitement level by building distance and teaching automatic sits.

Submissive Urination

This is generally a developmental issue. As the puppy matures, this problem tends to resolve on its own. BUT it can be made worse if handled incorrectly. Just ignore the puppy when greeting. Instruct visitors to do the same. Have introductions outside while the puppy is young. Clean up any sprinkles quickly and with little reaction. As the puppy matures, you can invite them to get a toy when people arrive. Carrying a toy distracts the puppy so they do not get overwhelmed by the greetings.

Strategies for Dealing with a Peeing Pup

Crate Training

Crate training is one of the most effective methods for teaching puppies the proper place to poop and pee. The basic idea is that you keep your puppy in his or her crate anytime you can't directly supervise them. Puppies are naturally reticent to pee or poop near their sleeping place, so they will usually instinctually hold it until you let them out. This helps you to get puppy to right place (outside) at the right time. Of course, you'll need to let them out to go every hour or two at first, but, over time, you'll be able to gradually extend the amount of time between potty trips. If your pup has an accident inside his crate, be sure to clean it thoroughly, to avoid lingering odors, which may trigger him to make a mistake.

Lengthen Your Pup's Potty Breaks

If your puppy is prone to peeing immediately after you return from your walks, consider extending the walk a little. Give him a few more opportunities to trigger his tinkling urge, and more completely empty his bladder.

Obliterate Odors

To a large extent, dogs decide where to go based on their nose. Who knows exactly why they pick the places they do, but more often than not, they like going in a place that has been used before, and they do this by using their keen nose to detect the faintest traces of old urine or poop. You'll want to be sure you thoroughly clean up any accidents.

Substrate Preferences: Puppies also develop substrate preferences for toileting. They may prefer grass, wood chips, tiles, bedding, carpets. We want to encourage substrates that are

productive, like grass, cement, or anything outside. We also want to discourage indoor substrates like carpet or area mats. If puppy has developed an inside preference, you will need to restrict access to it for a while by removing bedding from crate or putting away a preferred area rug.