

Diabetic Alert Dog Crate Training

Crate training uses a dog's natural instincts as a den animal. A dog's den is his home, a place to sleep, hide from danger, and raise a family. The crate becomes your dog's den, an ideal spot to snooze or take refuge. It is also an important part of training your dog to imprint to a particular scent. Here are some tips to help you crate train your dog.

1. Provide a wire crate for that is large enough for your dog to stand up, turn around and lie down comfortably. The crate should not be too large. He or she does not need to play Frisbee in it! Put down a soft pad, towel or rug to make the crate cozy, comfortable and den-like.
2. Leave the crate door open. Toss a treat inside. As the dog enters the crate, click or praise before the dog gets the treat. Click again and feed another treat while the dog is still in the crate. If your dog is hesitant to go into the crate, toss the treat near the door. Click and treat when your dog sticks its head in the crate.
**Note: Be sure the treats are very small—you will use lots of them. If you don't know how to use a clicker, use verbal praise such as, "Good dog," or, "Yes!"*
3. Gradually toss the treats farther and farther back in the crate. Click and treat each time the dog goes inside the crate. If it is willing to stay inside, even for a few seconds, click and keep treating. If the dog comes out, toss another treat inside. Click and treat.
4. At this point, add a verbal cue such as, "Go crate," "Kennel," or anything else you choose. When the dog goes into the crate expecting a treat, click and treat.
5. Gently close the door. Don't latch it. Click, treat and open the door. Gradually increase the length of time the door remains closed before you click and treat. Ultimately, the dog will stay quietly in the crate for several hours.
6. When the dog is happy in its crate for about 30 seconds, latch the door and take one step back. Click and treat.
7. Gradually mix up the length of time and your distance from the crate before you click and treat.
8. Leave the crate door open all the time when it is not in use. From time to time, toss treats inside so the dog will often find a happy surprise in its crate.
9. You can feed your dog meals in the crate to reinforce the idea that it is a happy place.
10. Crate training can take anywhere from one day to several weeks.
11. If you have problems, back up and repeat an earlier step to make it easier and more comfortable. Never let the dog become frightened or anxious in the crate. If you see this happening, you may want to go all the way back to the beginning to ensure that the crate becomes a secure place where good things happen.
12. The crate should be a place of solitude for the dog to rest. He should not be disturbed while in the crate. It is as if he disappears.

