

A Quick Guide to... **Puppy Toilet Training**

Key information:

- Young puppies have small bladders, and don't yet have full control over them. They need to go every 1-2 hours when awake.
- Puppies can last longer when they're asleep, but young puppies cannot last the whole night. They need to wee at least once during the night.
- Puppies have more control once they are six months old, so can be left for slightly longer without them needing to wee.
- Anxiety, fear and stress cause a puppy to wee more often, or without warning.
- Some puppies wee when excited, particularly when greeting people.
- All puppies are different – some are 'frequent wee-ers'.
- Puppies never wee or poo out of spite.
- Get your puppy checked out by a vet if they are: weeing more often, are uncomfortable/ in pain, drinking more, weeing in their sleep, if they have diarrhoea, or if there is any blood – these are signs of medical issues.

How do you know when they need to go?

- Sniffing, circling, and acting distracted are great indicators. Sometimes puppies do a pre-poo dash, and run round and act silly.
- Timing – if it's been a while since they've been, they need to go. Keep a diary with timings so you begin to see a pattern.
- If they've just woken up, had a game, done some training, or eaten some food...then they might need to go. If they've finished saying hello to a visitor, or something exciting has been happening...they might need to go.

Reward every wee and poo outside

- For a puppy to learn that going outside is the best place, they need to be rewarded a lot for going there.
- You need to observe your puppy at all times outside, so you can use a 'busy busy' (or similar) cue just as they are about to go, and then reward them with praise and a tasty food treat after they've finished.
- If the risk of an unvaccinated puppy going outside is too great, train them to use puppy pads instead – reward them for targeting the pads.

Clean up any accidents without fuss

- Never punish your puppy for accidents (it wasn't their fault, and you will only increase their stress which will make things worse).
- Use products that break down the enzymes in the wee – if they can smell previous wees, they are more likely to go there again.
- Clean up poos quickly, so your puppy doesn't develop a taste for them!

Containment

- It's not possible to be with your puppy the whole time – they need to be left somewhere safe, and on flooring that's easy to clean.
- If you use a large crate, or a crate plus pen, use puppy pads so that your puppy isn't forced to mess their beds.