

10 Crate Training Tips

1. Feed the dog in the crate every day. Make sure to put the bowl in the back of the crate. We want the dog to think that the crate is the next best place to be, other than being with you and/or the family.
2. As the dog is eating, close the door if you can. If the dog is uncomfortable with the door being closed, begin by leaving the crate door open and gradually close it a little each day as the dog gets used to his crate. Build up the time slowly that the dog is in the crate with the door closed.
3. As the dog runs into the crate each day to be fed, put words on it like, "Go Kennel!" or "Kennel Up!" Whatever you choose, this will be the dog's verbal cue to go into his crate. Soon all you will have to do is give the verbal cue and he will go in on his own. Be sure to reward this behavior with a treat, toy, etc...
4. Always put the dog in the crate with a mentally stimulating toy of some sort, like a frozen stuffed Kong. Frozen stuffed Kongs are also great for teething puppies.
5. Put the dog in the crate variably and unpredictably throughout the day.
6. Put the dog in the crate when you are not home, but even more importantly, when you are home. The dog needs to know that he is managed regardless of the situation surrounding him. There is no quicker way to teach your dog to hate his crate than by putting him in his crate only when you leave the house. Soon the dog will associate going into the crate with you leaving the house.
7. Make sure the dog is in the crate no more than 2-3 hours at a time. If you have a long workday, hire a pet sitter to walk your dog mid-day. Dogs, like people need to stretch their legs and be stimulated both mentally and physically.
8. Be sure to take the dog out of the crate only when he/she is quiet. If you take him/her out when they are whining, crying, or barking then they will think that this is the behavior that he needs to exhibit to be let out of the crate.
9. If you feel your dog is not comfortable in his crate, try a different style like a wire crate or a Vari-kennel type, and follow the tips above.

10. Make sure you feel comfortable crate training your dog. If you find it aversive, your dog will too no matter what procedures you follow. Instead create another "Safe Place" for your dog by putting up baby gates to separate a particular room like a kitchen or laundry room. Follow the tips above to acclimate your dog properly.