

PUPPY

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BLUEPRINT



**How to easily sleep 8 hours tonight even if
you've never potty trained a puppy before**

RYAN GWILLIAM

Table Of Contents

Introduction

Step 1: Regular feeding schedules of high-quality food

Step 2: Monitoring water intake so you have a predictable output of pee

Step 3: The Four-Hour Countdown to Bedtime

Step 4: Crafting the Perfect Puppy Sleeping Den

Step 5: Handling Accidents Gracefully

Step 6: What NOT to Do

Step 7: Potty Breaking Your Puppy the Right Way

Step 8: The Power of Puppy Play Dates

Step 9: Solving Common Puppy Sleep & Potty

Problems

Step 10: Life After Potty Training Success

Conclusion

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Introduction

Hey there, puppy parent!

If you're reading this, it probably means you're pretty tired. You're looking for that magic solution that lets both you and your new puppy get a full night of sleep. Great news! You're in the right place.

Before I get into the tactics that will help you get some much needed sleep. Let me tell you how I learned to potty train puppies so quickly...

Every journey begins somewhere. Mine started in the stylish setting of a modern condo complex, and a new puppy as my guide into uncharted territories of sleep deprivation and embarrassment.

This little Pitbull mix I named Butters, was adorable and full of energy. He made my life both a joy and a challenge. My brand new condo became a landmine of puppy accidents. The

walkways and sparkling clean elevators were no longer just the path to my home but also a trail of mistakes (potty training failures).

The neighbors? They were growing tired of the "surprises" we were leaving behind, and I couldn't blame them. I was so embarrassed. I always cleaned up as much as I could but it was still gross. The neighbors were sick of it.

With the hope of salvaging my relationship with my neighbors and my sanity, I did what any desperate first-time puppy owner would do: I turned to the internet. There, amidst the sea of advice, I found a DVD claiming to have all the answers. I bought it immediately and waited eagerly for it to arrive. Remember when you had to wait for things to arrive?

The DVD arrived, and I poured over its contents with high hopes. It provided some useful tips, no doubt, but it didn't hold the key I was searching for. The path to a potty-trained puppy still

seemed like a maze. But, this was just the beginning.

I would have to learn the hard way, diving into the deep end of puppy training, forced to innovate and adapt as I trained hundreds of puppies.

Sleep? A rare luxury. My time in the trenches of puppy training was my wake-up call, pushing me to refine and advance beyond the best advice available at that time.

I was well versed in the art of sleep deprivation, and now, I'm on the other side. I've taken the lessons I've learned, the innovations I've developed, and packed them all into this guide.

I'm thrilled to be able to share these hard-earned lessons with you, saving you from countless sleepless nights, frustration, and strain on your relationship with your cute pup.

The first time you use the method in this ebook, you'll set yourself up for a night where you're not woken up every couple of hours by a puppy that needs to go out. Sounds like a dream, right? And it's pretty simple too. It's all about food and water intake. If you know when and how much your puppy is eating/drinking you'll soon know when it's going to come out.

That's how you guarantee a good night's sleep.

Picture this: peaceful, uninterrupted nights. A puppy that sleeps soundly through the night, every night. A harmonious household where everyone (including the puppy) wakes up rested and ready for the day.

Here's the step-by-step of what we're going to do:

1. Regular feeding schedules of high quality food
2. Monitoring water intake so you have a predictable output of pee

3. What to do 4 hours before bedtime every night to guarantee success
4. The perfect puppy sleeping den
5. How to handle accidents gracefully
6. What NOT to do
7. Potty Breaks the Right Way

This method aligns with your puppy's biological rhythm, helping them learn how to control their bladder and bowel movements more effectively.

I've been potty training puppies for over 18 years now, and I've trained under some of the best trainers in the country. There's a reason I have so many [5 star reviews on Google](#). My company has over 200 reviews from happy dog owners who have used my methods to train their dogs.

In addition to this ebook, you can also check out my puppy and potty training segments I've done on the news for both [Fox13](#) and [ABC4](#). I've been on the news dozens of times to share my dog training tips and methods.

I don't mention this to brag, I simply want you to be confident that you've come to the right place.

I am someone who obsesses over being efficient with my time, and I want to do the same with your time today. I have written this ebook to give you the simplest, most effective potty training advice in existence.

Alright, let's get started!

Your friend with the treat-filled pockets,

Ryan Gwilliam

Step 1: Regular Feeding Schedules of High-Quality Food

Did you know that the type of food you feed your puppy, and when you feed it, can make a world of difference in potty training? Yup, it's true. Feeding your pup high-quality food at regular times gives them the nutrients they need to grow strong and healthy. Plus, it makes their "bathroom" schedule pretty predictable, which is a game-changer for potty training.

I recommend a combination of a high-quality kibble and raw meat. I feed my dogs [UtahPaw.com](https://www.UtahPaw.com) chicken recipe but you should feed the puppy recipe until your pup is around 1 year old. For the raw meat, I feed my dogs chicken feet and organ meat. It's a bit more expensive to add raw food, but quality matters and I want to feed my dogs the best.

If you're on a tight budget, you can leave out the raw meat and just feed a high-quality kibble. There are plenty of kibbles with good quality

ingredients out there. You can see ratings on AllAboutDogFood.co.uk. Always check before buying food for your pup. Since all the foods say they're really high-quality but few actually are.

You'll need to determine the right amount of food for your puppy (this will depend on their breed, age, and weight), split it into meals, and serve these meals at the same times every day.

Over feeding can lead to obesity (this is really hard on your pup's joints and can lead to issues when they're older). Also, having loose stools makes potty training harder and leads to 4+ poops a day which is unnecessary and unhealthy. 2-3 poops per day is normal for puppies.

So how much do you feed? Whatever the dog food bag says to feed minus 10% is a good general rule. I find most dog food labels recommend feeding more than is needed. If you're worried your dog isn't the right weight consult a Veterinarian. Vets generally say, you

should be able to feel your dog's ribs when you pet them but not be able to see them.

Young puppies (7-12 weeks old) tend to be a bit chubbier than that which is normal, but they should start matching the Vet's description before long.

Again, if they are pooping 4 or more times per day, they are either eating too much or their food is low quality or both.

Puppies usually eat 3 times a day, so keep that in mind.

Don't just leave food out all day. Instead, give your pup a set time to eat (around 5-10 minutes should do it), then take away any food they didn't eat. This teaches them that mealtime isn't an all-day event but a specific time to eat.

And what happens when you stick to this plan?

You get a puppy whose digestion and potty times are as regular as clockwork, making potty training a breeze! Your puppy will be healthier and easier to train thanks to their high-quality diet.

Plus, you are setting the stage for the other steps in this guide to work their magic. Remember, consistency is the secret ingredient to success. So, stick with it, and you'll start seeing results in no time.

Step 2: Monitoring Water Intake

Alright, so we've covered food. Now, let's talk about water. Just as with humans, water plays a vital role in a puppy's health.

But here's the kicker: controlling when and how much water your puppy drinks can be a game-changer for successful potty training. By monitoring water intake, you can predict when your pup will need to "go," which means fewer accidents and more sleep for you.

Your mission is to keep a close eye on when and how much water your puppy is drinking. Most puppies will over-drink given the chance which makes potty training really hard.

First, make sure your puppy has access to fresh water during the day, especially around meal times. But here's the key:

About **four hours before you hit the hay, take the water dish away.**

This gives your puppy enough time to process and eliminate the water before bedtime, making it more likely they'll sleep through the night.

So, what's in it for you if you follow this step? Well, for starters, a more predictable potty schedule. Fewer "surprises" on your carpet. More sleep. And a puppy that's well on its way to being fully potty trained. So, give it a go - your future, well-rested self will thank you.

It's really that simple to do. Take water away EARLY and you get to sleep. Your puppy will act really thirsty before bed but you have to be strong and not give in. If you stay strong you get to sleep and your puppy learns to hold it for longer periods each night. SCORE!

How to tell if your puppy is dehydrated?

The big thing I watch for is their pee color. Just like with humans, the darker yellow the pee the more dehydrated they are. Most likely your puppy's pee is CRYSTAL CLEAR.

Am I right? How did I know? Because I've overhydrated more puppies than anyone on the planet lol. That sad look they gave me broke my heart, and so I said ok just a little more water. Then they peed in their kennel or on my floor, and I ended up giving them a bath and cleaning the carpet. I learned to be strong, you too must be strong.

I had to learn that lesson many times before finally getting it right. The wisdom in this guide helps you fast forward to the end of my journey where results come fast!

Every time your puppy pees, take note of the color. Here's your general guideline:

Crystal clear = your puppy is way over hydrated,
you will suffer tonight

Light yellow = well hydrated

Medium yellow = slightly dehydrated, give your
puppy a drink

Medium/dark yellow = dehydrated, get this
puppy some water asap

Dark yellow = not good, get this puppy some
water asap

Step 3: The Four-Hour Countdown to Bedtime

Alright, we're moving on to the main course. This step is the real secret sauce to making sure you and your puppy can sleep through the night. By preparing correctly for bedtime, you're setting both of you up for success.

Your mission is to establish a consistent routine for the four hours leading up to bedtime. This routine is going to revolve around managing your puppy's intake of food and water, and making sure they get a chance to eliminate before bed.

I usually go to bed at 10pm, so I never give puppies water after 6pm. I know they've had plenty of water with dinner (I feed around 5pm), and they get a little more water right at 6pm. This gives their body plenty of time to process everything and will reduce the chances of a midnight bathroom break.

I know they are well hydrated because when they pee it's a light yellow color. So at 10pm I have to tell myself, "call this puppy's bluff Ryan. She is running over to the water bowl and seems really thirsty, but if you give in you will suffer the consequences at like 3am. Don't do it! Be strong!"

So, four hours before bedtime, that water dish we talked about? It's time for it to disappear.

Now, let's talk about those all-important potty breaks. You're going to take your puppy outside for a bathroom break four hours before bed, then again two hours before, and one hour before. Finally, right before you're ready to catch some Zs, you'll take them out for one last potty break. This routine ensures that they've emptied their bladder and bowels before bed, significantly reducing the chances of midnight accidents.

And what's the payoff for all this? Imagine a world where nighttime accidents are a thing of the past. Where your puppy sails through the

night comfortably, and so do you. By sticking to this four-hour routine, that world becomes your reality. You'll wake up refreshed and ready to face the day, and so will your well-trained puppy. That, my friends, is what I call a win-win.

Step 4: Crafting the Perfect Puppy Sleeping Den

Now, let's talk about the sleeping arrangements. The space where your puppy sleeps is crucial to their comfort and sense of security, which directly affects their (and your) ability to sleep through the night.

Your goal is to create an ideal sleeping environment for your puppy. This involves choosing the right type of bed, its placement, and the overall surroundings.

Let's start with the bed. Your best options are a plastic crate or a wire crate with a blanket draped over the top. Inside, keep it simple - no bedding. This minimizes the chance of any accidents and discourages any midnight chewing sprees.

As for where to place it, choose a quiet area where your pup won't be disturbed. Some privacy is good, but make sure you can still keep an eye on them.

Now, here's a little tip for that tough first night: you can bend the rules a bit...

It's a big change for your pup, leaving their mom and littermates, so they might need some extra reassurance. Feel free to let them sleep with you in your bed or sleep on the floor next to your bed.

However, after the first night, it's best to be firm about them sleeping in their crate. It might be tough at first, but if you want to sleep through the night consistently then don't ignore this advice.

By creating a comfortable, secure sleeping environment and establishing a consistent sleeping routine, you're setting the stage for successful nights. Your puppy will learn to love their own space and will be more likely to sleep through the night, allowing you to do the same. It's a small investment of time and effort that pays off big time in the long run.

Step 5: Handling Accidents Gracefully

Accidents happen. No matter how much we prepare, how consistent we are, or how perfect the sleeping den is, there will be nights when your puppy just can't hold it. And that's okay. It's part of the process. What matters is how you handle it.

Your job is to handle these accidents calmly and gracefully. Remember, your puppy isn't doing this on purpose, they're still learning. So, patience is key.

First off, make sure you have the cleaning supplies you need on hand: enzymatic cleaner, paper towels, and a good attitude.

If your puppy has an accident, clean it up quickly and thoroughly. Use the enzymatic cleaner to break down the scent markers that could encourage your pup to use the same spot again in the future.

Avoid scolding or punishing your puppy. Instead, reinforce the potty training steps and routines. If you catch them in the act, quickly interrupt them and take them outside to finish.

Don't pick them up and run them outside. Instead, interrupt the behavior and then guide them outside so they learn to walk the path to the proper potty area outside.

Remember, this is a learning process for your puppy. Be patient, be persistent, and before you know it, these accidents will become a thing of the past.

By handling accidents gracefully and maintaining a positive attitude, you're reinforcing the training and making it easier for your puppy to understand what's expected. This approach will lead to fewer and fewer accidents over time and will support the overall training process. Plus, it'll help you maintain a stronger, more trusting relationship with your puppy.

Step 6: What NOT to Do

Just as knowing what to do is crucial in ensuring a good night's sleep for both you and your puppy, knowing what not to do is equally important.

There are some common pitfalls that can hinder your progress and create unnecessary challenges. Let's tackle these head-on so you can avoid them from the get-go.

Steer clear of a few common mistakes:

- Feeding low-quality food (we feed UtahPaw.com which is our very own premium-quality dog food)
- Giving unlimited access to water
- Carrying your puppy outside during the day (I break this rule at night because I want to get back to bed asap, but during the day it's best to teach your puppy to walk the path to the potty area.)

These actions might seem harmless, but they can actually set back your training efforts.

By avoiding these common mistakes, you're setting yourself and your puppy up for success. It might seem like a lot to remember, but with time, these steps will become second nature. And when they do, the reward of a full, uninterrupted night's sleep will be well worth it.

Quick Notes About Dog Food

For a deeper dive into dog food, I highly recommend you:

- Review dog food ratings by going to AllAboutDogFood.co.uk (your puppy's current food is probably not as healthy as you think it is). Ask me how I know :(
- Listen to the [Feed Your Dog Facts](#) podcast for a clear understanding on how the dog food industry works and manages to sell mostly low-quality kibble to unsuspecting dog owners like you and I.

Thankfully there are lots of great dog foods on the market as well, you just need to know how to find them! If you don't live inside the free delivery area for Utah Paw dog food, you can find other high-quality foods on Dog Food Advisor.

Step 7: Potty Breaking Your Puppy the Right Way

Now, let's delve into potty breaks, a crucial part of your puppy's routine and an integral component of successful potty training. There's a technique to it; when executed correctly, these brief outdoor visits can instruct your puppy to do their business promptly, saving you time and avoiding lengthy potty breaks at inconvenient hours.

It's essential to keep these potty breaks short—five minutes or less. The goal here is to communicate to your puppy that potty breaks are for business, not leisure.

Some puppies are really good at sniffing around and not going potty in order to extend their potty breaks. Then as soon as you walk in the house they pee. So frustrating!

The strategy is simple. When it's time for a potty break, take your puppy outside and give them

about five minutes to do their business. Don't let them fall into the trap of extending their outdoor time by sniffing around and holding out - this isn't a sightseeing trip.

If your puppy successfully goes during this time, great! They get to come back inside and enjoy some playtime with you. This is their reward for a job well done. This is a great time to reward with praise as well.

But if they don't go, they go right back into their crate for about 10 minutes. Then you try again. Repeat this process until they successfully do their business during their potty break.

Oh and if you have a puppy who runs away from you and loves to play keep away... do all your potty breaks with a leash on. Once your puppy goes potty the leash comes off. This will be reward enough for your pup to WANT to go potty quickly because they want that leash off ASAP.

By keeping potty breaks short and structured, you're teaching your puppy to do their business quickly and efficiently. This routine not only saves you time but also reinforces the right behavior. The result? A puppy that understands the purpose of potty breaks and, over time, becomes more reliable about doing their business promptly.

Step 8: The Power of Puppy Play Dates

Alright, let's talk about something fun - play dates! But these aren't just about fun and games. Regular playdates with other puppies can significantly enhance your puppy's training journey, including potty training.

Plus, it's a surefire way to ensure a tired puppy who's ready to sleep through the night.

It's simple: make sure your puppy gets plenty of playtime. This should be at least three days per week, but ideally, it would be every day. Each play session should last about 45 minutes, and it should involve active play like wrestling and play fighting as long as both dogs are having fun.

Find friends, family, or neighbors with well-behaved dogs who enjoy the company of puppies. If that's not an option, consider enrolling your puppy in a [puppy day training program](#) like ours. We'll ensure your pup gets

lots of playtime, wears themselves out, and reinforces good potty training habits.

During playtime, puppies should be allowed to engage in active, physical play. This includes wrestling, play fighting, and gentle biting. This type of play is essential for their development and helps them burn off energy, which can lead to a more relaxed, compliant puppy at home.

Regular play dates can make a world of difference in your puppy's behavior and training progress. They provide an outlet for your puppy's energy, reduce frustration, and encourage good behavior at home, including consistent potty habits. Not to mention, a well-exercised puppy is more likely to sleep through the night, giving you the peaceful, uninterrupted sleep you've been dreaming of. So, get out there and schedule those play dates!

Step 9: Solving Common Puppy Sleep & Potty Problems

When Things Aren't Working: Go Back to Basics

You've followed the plan but are still facing challenges? Let's fix that.

Remember: puppies as young as 8 weeks old should be able to sleep a full 7 hours consistently if you do everything right. If that's not happening, something needs adjustment.

The "I Was Doing Great But Now I'm Not" Puppy

The Situation: Your puppy was sleeping through the night but has started having accidents or waking up again.

The Fix: Check your consistency! This is almost always the problem. Triple-check that:

- Everyone in the family follows the exact feeding schedule

- Water is removed 4 hours before bedtime (no exceptions!)
- Food amount is correct (overfeeding = more bathroom trips)
- Water amount is appropriate (check pee color - light yellow = perfect)
- Bedtime is the same each night
- Food quality hasn't changed (low-quality food causes more frequent poops)

The schedule is everything! One family member sneaking extra water or food can ruin your progress. Have a family meeting and make sure everyone understands the importance of the plan.

The Indoor Specialist: Goes Outside But Waits to Come In

The Situation: Your puppy holds it outside then immediately goes when you come back in.

The Fix: Shorter potty breaks are better! This may seem backward, but:

1. Take your puppy out for 5 minutes or less

2. If they don't go, put them directly back in their crate for about 10 minutes
3. Try again with another short potty break
4. Repeat until they go outside
5. When they finally go outside, give big praise!
6. Let them enjoy hanging out with you inside!

This teaches your puppy that holding it = more crate time.

Going potty quickly = freedom to chew on a bone or play with toys!

Once your puppy connects these dots it is a pretty easy sell! Most puppies figure this out within 2-3 days.

The Midnight Crier: When Your Puppy Won't Stop Whining

The Situation: Your puppy whines, barks, or howls in their crate at night.

The Fix:

1. Place the crate right next to your bed where you can reach it. Being close to you helps calm down most puppies!
2. Keep the crate simple. No bedding unless your puppy has proven they never have accidents in the crate.
3. If your puppy is accident-free, you can add a t-shirt with your scent or a small dog bed.
4. When crying starts, say "It's okay" in a calm voice the first couple of times.
5. If crying continues, switch to a soft but stern "no no" while lightly tapping the crate.
6. This lets your puppy know you hear them but there's no negotiating. They will be sleeping in the crate, and it's time for bed right now.

Remember: Never take your puppy out of the crate when they're crying unless it's a scheduled potty break. This only teaches them that crying works!

The one exception to this is when you suspect they need to potty. If your spidey senses are tingling, take them out to potty (on leash if they might be tempted to run around and play). The potty break should be even shorter than normal. I'm talking 2 minutes or less! If they need to go for real and they are panicking in the crate, they will go quickly (immediately in most cases).

The Crate Hater: When Your Puppy Seems Terrified

The Situation: Your puppy panics in their crate.

The Fix:

- Make sure the crate is right beside your bed
- Start with the right size (just big enough to stand, turn around, and lie down)
- Cover it with a blanket to create a den-like feeling
- Feed all meals in the crate
- Never use the crate for punishment

- Always maintain a positive attitude around the crate

If your puppy is truly distressed, you can sleep on the floor next to them for the first night or two. Then move back to your bed with your pup right next to the bed in their crate.

Special Situations: Weather, Apartments, and More

Snow and Ice: Always shovel a potty area for your puppy! Cold paws create pups who prefer to hold it until they can go potty in the warmth of your home.

For extremely cold weather, lay down straw in their potty area (available at farm supply stores). The extra effort is worth it to maintain outdoor potty habits.

No Yard: Find the closest grass or dirt area and make it your dedicated spot. Even if it's a longer walk, it's worth it. Natural smells are rewarding to puppies and reinforce good potty habits.

Gravel or wood chip areas work if grass or dirt isn't available.

Apartments: Your puppy can and should go outside. The natural environment is your best training ally because smelling nature makes dogs happy and encourages them to potty again. Plus since you probably live around other dogs, those dogs will be teaching your pup where all the best pee spots are! Be sure to thank them and their owners for the unintentional potty training help :)

What NOT to Do: Avoid These Common Mistakes

No Bell Training: Despite how tempting it seems, bell training often creates more problems than it solves. Puppies quickly learn to ring the bell for attention or playtime, not just potty breaks. Stick with the schedule - it's what really works!

No Potty Pads Ever: Potty pads send a confusing message: "It's sometimes okay to go

inside." They also leave scent markers in your home that remind your puppy they've pottied there before. Even if it means more effort initially, taking your puppy outside is always better.

Don't "Stay Out Longer": If your puppy isn't going potty outside, longer breaks aren't the answer. Instead, find the pattern that's causing the problem:

- Are they distracted by leaves or other outdoor excitement?
- Is something making them too nervous to go? Like lots of wind, weird sounds (traffic, construction, etc)
- Is someone giving extra water?
- Does it only happen at certain times of the day?

There's always a pattern. Find it, fix it, and watch the problem disappear!

Holding Time Realities

Remember this simple rule: Your puppy's age in months equals how many hours they can hold it during the day. A 3-month-old puppy can reasonably hold it for about 3 hours during the daytime.

At night, most puppies can hold it longer once they're in a good routine. This is why the evening preparation is so important; it sets your puppy up for nighttime success.

The Power of Consistency

The families who succeed fastest with this method are the ones who follow it exactly. Half-measures produce half-results! If you're struggling, don't look for new tricks or shortcuts, instead double down on the basics:

1. Fixed feeding times with measured amounts
2. Water management (especially in the evening)

3. Proper crate setup next to your bed
4. Short, boring potty breaks
5. Consistency with the rules

Most "failures" in puppy potty training are actually inconsistency problems. When everyone follows the same plan, puppies learn incredibly quickly!

Step 10: Life After Potty Training Success

Congratulations! If you've followed the blueprint, you now have a puppy that sleeps through the night and understands the basics of potty training. But what comes next? How do you maintain this success while giving your puppy more freedom?

Gradually Expanding Your Puppy's World

The key word here is *gradually*. Many new puppy owners make the mistake of giving too much freedom too quickly once their puppy has a few good days.

Using Baby Gates for Controlled Freedom

Baby gates are your best friends during this transition period. Here's how to use them effectively:

- Start by confining your puppy to areas with hard surfaces (tile, hardwood, vinyl) where accidents are easier to clean.

- Create "puppy zones" using baby gates that give slightly more space than the crate but still limit access
- Move the gates to include more areas only after your puppy consistently behaves, proving they are ready for more freedom
- Remember that each new room is a new challenge. Puppies don't automatically understand that the same rules apply everywhere

The Leash Method: Freedom with Control

Even when out of the crate, your puppy should drag a 6 foot leash at all times when supervised. This serves multiple purposes:

- You can quickly step on or grab the leash if you see warning signs that a potty break is needed
- Prevents the frustrating "keep away" games puppies love to play
- Helps your puppy learn to move with you around the house

- Makes getting your pup outside for potty breaks soooo much smoother

If you find yourself forgetting to watch your puppy, attach the leash to your belt loop or wrist. This physical connection ensures you'll notice your puppy's movements and signals. Remember, consistency is key to continued success!

When Potty Breaks Should Happen

Even as your puppy gains more bladder control, certain triggers always warrant an immediate potty break. I stick to the following guidelines until your pup hasn't had an accident in 3-4 weeks:

- Immediately after eating (food in often means waste out!)
- After waking up, even from a short nap
- After play sessions, especially exciting ones (or if they pause during play to go sniff around, this is a dead giveaway)
- After training sessions

This might mean taking your puppy out multiple times in a short period. For example, if your puppy wakes up, has breakfast, and then plays, that's three potty breaks in under an hour! This is normal and necessary, especially for younger puppies.

Special Considerations for Small Breeds

If you have a toy or small breed puppy, expect potty training to take longer. Their tiny bladders develop full strength more slowly than larger breeds. Some things to remember:

- Their signals can be more subtle and easier to miss (they are so dang quiet!)
- They may need more frequent potty breaks even after basic training is established
- Cold or wet weather affects them more, sometimes causing them to refuse to go outside

Be extra patient with these little ones. They're doing their best with very small equipment!

When to Phase Out the Crate

Don't rush to retire the crate! Most puppies benefit from crate training until at least 8 months of age, and many dogs continue to use crates happily throughout their lives.

When you're ready to test more freedom, follow this progression:

1. **Start with supervised freedom:** Let your puppy out of the crate while you're actively watching them in the same room
2. **Progress to short absences:** Leave the room for a few seconds, then return and praise calmly
3. **Gradually extend time:** Increase to a few minutes, then 15 minutes, then an hour
4. **Home test runs:** Go work in the yard or garage for short periods while your puppy stays loose in their safe area
5. **First "away" trip:** Your first time actually leaving should be very brief. Try just driving around the block or to the gas station and back

- 6. Build slowly:** Gradually increase time away only when your puppy proves they can handle each step

If at any point your puppy has an accident or chews something inappropriate, go back a step. This isn't punishment, it's recognizing they need more time to develop reliability.

Remember: Even one successful "furniture shopping" session (where they help themselves to your couch cushions) can set your training back significantly and teach them bad habits. Protect your belongings and your puppy by taking this process slowly.

Signs Your Puppy Is Ready for More Freedom

How do you know when your puppy has earned the next level of freedom? Look for these indicators:

- Consistently seeks out appropriate chew toys when bored

- Reliably signals when they need to go outside
- Settles calmly without being asked
- No accidents for at least 4 weeks
- Shows good decision-making (choosing toys over shoes, for example)
- Responds quickly to reminders to follow the rules

Even when your puppy meets these criteria, continue monitoring closely as you give them more freedom. Slowly giving them freedom now prevents setbacks later. It seems like it's taking longer, but it will actually get you to the finish line a whole lot faster!

When Accidents Happen (And They Will)

Even the best-trained dogs occasionally have accidents. Maybe they're sick, or perhaps you missed their signals. How you respond makes all the difference:

If you catch them in the act:

- Interrupt quickly by clapping your hands
- Immediately take them outside to finish
- Clean thoroughly with an enzymatic cleaner

If you find it later:

- Say nothing to your dog (they won't make the connection with something that happened earlier anyway)
- Clean thoroughly
- Review what went wrong: Did you miss a potty break? Was there a schedule change? Was there a dietary change?

Remember: Occasional setbacks don't erase your progress. They're just a reminder to check in with your routine.

Final Thoughts

Your puppy's potty training journey is about more than just keeping your carpets clean. It's about establishing trust, consistency, and clear communication that will serve as the foundation for your entire relationship.

By taking the slow and steady approach to expanding freedom, you're setting your puppy up for a lifetime of good habits.

Remember: it's much easier to prevent bad habits than to fix them later!

The time you invest now in proper supervision, consistent scheduling, and gradual freedom will pay dividends for years to come in the form of a well-adjusted, trustworthy adult dog.

Conclusion

And there you have it, the steps to ensure you and your puppy sleep through the night. You now have the knowledge and the power to make those sleepless nights a thing of the past.

My favorite part about helping dogs? You're not just training your puppy; you're also training yourself. You're developing patience, consistency, and a deeper understanding of your new friend.

Plus, imagine what you can achieve with a full night's sleep under your belt. Your productivity could skyrocket, your mood could improve, your overall quality of life could be so much better. That's the power of a good night's sleep, and you now have the tools to make it happen.

By the way, your first night might not go exactly as planned, but don't get discouraged. Keep at it, keep refining your routine, and before you know

it, you and your puppy will be sleeping like... well, like puppies.

It's been an honor teaching you what I know about potty training puppies. I've learned the lessons the hard way so you don't have to. Thank you for your valuable time and attention! I hope it has been time well spent for you and your puppy.

Your friend with the treat-filled pockets,

Ryan Gwilliam

P.S. When you're ready for personalized help, in person, with one of our trainers, all you need to do is book your free evaluation. You can do that by going here:

Book Your Free Evaluation:
TrainWalkPoop.com/contact

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