

# CRATE TRAINING 101

**Crates can be a positive and important tool for overall training, and specifically for housetraining.**

If introduced properly, dogs love their own room, a space they can feel safe and retreat to when they feel stressed or tired. A crate is a useful tool for housetraining and more. Dogs that are crate trained can travel safely, stay in hotels, adjust nicely to future boarding and vet care, etc.

## Crate Basics

- A crate should be large enough for a dog to lie down and turn around in.
- Ideally, crates should be used for no longer than four hours at a time.
- If a dog has never been crated before, introduce the crate slowly. Put food just inside the opening and eventually move the food to the back of the crate. The goal is to close the door, but the process should be done gradually.
- Feed at least one meal a day in the crate, which helps make crating a part of your dog's daily routine. Feeding meals in the crate makes the crate a positive place where wonderful things happen every day of a dog's life.



## Crates are Magical

- To entertain and occupy your dog during your absence, have special treats that you only give to your dog in the crate. A KONG filled with cream cheese, peanut butter, canned food, or treats is an excellent distraction. Freezing the KONG will make the fun last longer.
- Make the crate a magical place by hiding treats in it when the dog is not looking or putting a thin line of peanut butter on the back wall. Your dog will get in the habit of entering the crate to see what wonderful surprises might be waiting inside!
- Put warm blankets from the dryer in the crate or place it near a heating vent to encourage crate use for very young puppies and breeds that love warmth.
- Play soothing music or a sound machine for the dog while he is crated. Put dim lighting on to encourage quiet time. Some dogs do better with a blanket draped over their crate.



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**Remember, your job is to convince your dog that the crate is the BEST place in the house!**

## Your Dog Says No – Go to a Crate

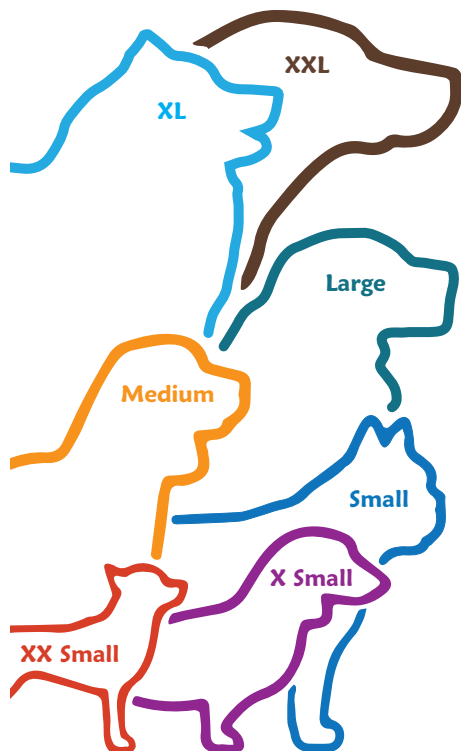
- If your dog is resistant to a crate initially, give ALL meals and treats in the crate. Then place the dog in the crate but do not leave the room. Allow the dog to remain in the crate for a few minutes, gradually increasing the time and eventually leaving the room and then the house for short intervals.
- The goal is to condition your dog to see the crate as positive and short-term, and to assure him that you are returning.



## Crate Problem Solving

- Never let a dog out of the crate until he is quiet. Otherwise, he will quickly learn he can get out of his crate by exhibiting negative behavior. Be proactive so he doesn't start crying or digging.
- Ignore your dog a few minutes before taking out of the crate. When you let the dog out of the crate, do not make a big deal out of the exit. That excitement would communicate, "Whew, glad you are out of that awful place."

## Recommended Crate and Carrier Sizing Chart



### XX Large

36" long & up to 28" tall – 90+ lbs

Labrador, German Shepherd, Golden Retriever

### X Large

32" long & up to 25" tall – up to 70 lbs

Samoyed, Chow Chow, Hound

### Large

30" long & up to 23" tall – up to 50 lbs

Cocker Spaniel, Shetland Sheepdog, Border Collie

### Medium

24" long & up to 20" tall – up to 30 lbs

Beagle, Miniature Schnauzer, Corgi

### Small

22" long & up to 16" tall – up to 25 lbs

French Bulldog, Cavalier King Charles, Scottish Terrier

### X Small

18" long & up to 11" tall – up to 15 lbs

Miniature Dachshund, Maltese, Pekingese

### XX Small

16" long & up to 9" tall – up to 10 lbs

Chihuahua, Pomeranian, Yorkshire Terrier

**Note:** If you are buying a crate for a puppy, choose one they can grow into.