

# Crate Training

## Crate Training Your Puppy

For the owner, careful crate training can help to deal with housebreaking. Most dogs respect the sanctity of den, and their nature directs them into soiling the nest area. Thus, a crate can be used to confine a dog between unsuccessful excursions to a selected outside "bathroom" area. No matter what age you begin crate training your dog, all experiences within the crate should be good ones. Ideally, begin with a very young pup (the most malleable substrate), and establish good associations with each exposure to the crate. This can be arranged by:

- Allowing the pup free access to the crate so that he can come and go at will prior to confining him.
- Make the crate a comfortable place by putting a blanket and perhaps some toys inside.
- Praise the pup every time he goes in the crate.
- Confine the pup (shut the door of the crate) for short periods of time, at first, ensuring that company is at hand (either you or a closely bonded canine counterpart).
- Never use the crate as a place of punishment.
- Make sure that no one disturbs the pup when he is inside the crate so the crate comes to be appreciated as a place of refuge.

Using the above protocol, there is no reason that the dog should not gravitate toward the crate for rest and relaxation. If this is achieved, the dog will find the crate amongst his favorite places in life. Unfortunately, because of bad experiences, many dogs grow up loathing their crate with a vengeance, acting out in one way or another whenever they are confined.

## Crate Training Your Adult Dog

The following is a program by which older dogs can be introduced or even reintroduced to crates as a place of refuge. The goal is to systematically desensitize the dog by making the crate appear as benign as possible.

- Position the crate in a high traffic area of the house and make the interior of the crate comfortable and inviting.
- Enrich the space with food treats/toys and initially, always leave the door open.
- Feed the dog progressively closer to the entrance of the crate, and reward him with praise as he gets closer to the crate.
- Eventually, move the food bowl across the threshold of the crate and then just inside the crate so that he has to put his head and shoulders inside in order to eat.
- Move the food bowl progressively further towards the back of the crate so that the dog has to go further inside to eat.
- Always praise the dog for being in or near the crate.
- Do not confine the dog in the crate until he shows that he will enter willingly and of his own accord.
- If things go well with the acclimation, the next thing is to try closing and fastening the door for brief periods, while staying in the area.
- Gradually, the duration of confinement can be increased. Eventually you may be able to leave the dog confined for considerable periods of time and have tranquility prevail.
- Do not leave the dog alone in the crate while you are away until he is perfectly comfortable being in it while you are there.

The program may take time but it will work. Note: With any behavioral modification scheme, like crate training, the golden rule is that if there is no progress in 3 to 5 days, change the strategy. It is important to emphasize throughout training and beyond that the crate should never be a place in which the dog has any negative experiences.

For any other questions about the Deutsch Kurzhaar, training or testing, you can visit us at: [www.kurzhaarforum.com](http://www.kurzhaarforum.com) and you ask any questions you have had, we will try to help you and give you all the info you looking for.