

PUPPY CONFINEMENT & ALONE TIME TRAINING PLAN



BEFORE YOU START

The point of this plan is to build a healthy association between your puppy and the crate. If at any time they are showing signs of stress (refer to Dog Body Language for examples), let them out of the crate immediately.



GOAL

Your puppy will be comfortable in its crate for up to an hour.

RULES

- If the dog gets 5 repetitions in a row correct, go to the next step
- If dog misses three in a row, drop to previous step

DEFINITIONS

Mark/treat (M/T): mark is any word of your choice that tells your dog the moment s/he did the rewardable thing (yes! Or nice! Or click clicker).
Treat is providing treat.

HAND POSITIONS

Hand position step 1



Hand position step 2 - end





THE PLAN

1	Lure your puppy into their crate with a treat tucked in the palm of your hand. Once they have entered the crate, mark and treat.
2	Prompt the puppy to enter the crate without a treat in hand. Once they have entered the crate, mark and treat.
3	Prompt the puppy to enter the crate. Close the door for one second. Mark and treat. Open the door.
4	Repeat Step 3, increasing the duration to 2 seconds.
5	Repeat Step 3, increasing the duration to 3 seconds.
6	Repeat Step 3, increasing the duration to 5 seconds.
7	Repeat Step 3, increasing the duration to 10 seconds.
8	Place a long-lasting distraction like a kong or lick mat with peanut butter. Prompt your puppy to enter the crate. Close the door and sit next to the crate for 10 minutes, dropping in extra treats every 20-30 seconds.
9	Repeat Step 8, leaving the room and coming back after 10-15 seconds several times at random intervals.
10	Repeat Step 8, leaving the room for 30 seconds to 1 minute and providing extra treats every minute instead of every 20-30 seconds.
11	Repeat Step 8, increasing the total duration from 10 minutes to 30 minutes. Leave the room for 3-5 minutes at random intervals. Provide extra treats every few minutes.
12	Repeat Step 11, increasing absences to up to 10 minutes. Include short, under 2 minute, absences.
13	Repeat Step 11, increasing the total duration from 30 minutes to 60 minutes. Leave the room for varying periods at random intervals, including one absence of 15-20 minutes.
14	Repeat Step 13, increasing the maximum absence time to 30 minutes.
15	Repeat Step 13, increasing the maximum absence time to 45 minutes.
16	Leave the puppy alone for 1 hour.



WHAT'S NEXT

Once your puppy is comfortable being alone in their crate, you can introduce some distractions to increase their tolerance to sounds outside. If applicable, have other members of your family conduct their regular routines while you work with your puppy. They should be able to relax in their crate regardless of what's happening outside of it.

HELPFUL HINTS

Teaching puppies to be confined only works if the puppy has a strong, positive association with their crate. Forcing them through these steps while they are stressed will only make it more difficult for them to be comfortable in their crates for long periods later. This is a process that will likely take several weeks for some puppies, so take things slow.