HOUSEBREAKING INSIGHT

Subject: Housebreaking response
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Okay, I'm losing my patience.. as soon as I give him a chance to tell me he needs to go out, he just pees on the floor instead.

I've tried to teach him how to tell us. There is a bell at every door. I ding the bell with his paw, act real excited- Okay!!! You want to go out? Wowee! Good boy! - and reward that, and then again reward him for doing it outside and returning to the door to be let in.

RESPONSE:

The bell is a great idea but try this:

Put *one* bell on the *one* door he is to go out to go to his *one* potty place - he begins to associate the bell with that door. When you think he wants to eliminate put a tiny dab of peanut butter on the bell and ask "do you want to go out?", dog licks the PB, the bell rings and the door opens!

Go out with him to the *one* potty place and reward him for eliminating right there.... put the cause (potty in the right place) and the effect (tiny morsel of goodie) immediately next to one another- any delay in cause & effect eliminates the connection.

Have just one potty place for a while (1-2 months) till he 'gets it'

You need to understand too that the bell and going to the potty are 2 different behaviors which you can not attach to one another *in his head*... he's got to put the two things together himself and all you can do is to give him the tools.

BTW: No, I don't scold him when he pees inside the house. If I catch him in the act, I yell , "NO!" to try to startle him into stopping...

If you catch the dog about to make a mistake:
1. clap your hands - "Yikes" or "OOPS" - the startle should get the puppy's attention 2. gently remove the dog to the approved potty place
3. reward appropriate elimination

This should not ilicit a reaction of, "OH OH, WHAT'S WRONG!" from the dog, rather a, "huh?" reaction.... just enough to get the pup's attention- if he's already in the process... let him finish, it's already done anyway.

Note it says "If you catch the dog about to make a mistake" now that's the key! If you can get one or two reps of this the light often comes on... "OH, I got it...it has to do with location! Eureka!"

A loud "NO!" and a grab often teaches puppy to go hide, because, "people are sometimes dangerous when I pee in front of them"

Your problem is VERY TYPICAL! When the pup is small everyone knows it's not housetrained but as it *looks* more mature *and* accidents have not happened for a while you *assume* the job is done and then....whoops- they backslide.

Here is the housetraining handout I use for clients: There may be a few more management tricks for you also.

BE PATIENT! It will happen, I promise!

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HOUSETRAINING “HAND OUT”

Behavioral Shaping:
set the dog up for repeated success over a long period of time

Top quality diet - feed on a regular schedule- NO FREE CHOICE

Clean vs Dirty - started in the den (crate) expand to the house is "clean" - the outdoors is "dirty")

Schedule - Schedule - Stick to the Schedule!

Feeding times (no free choice), potty times, play times

Write down the schedule and stick to it - post it - dogs are creatures of habit

You know the dog will need to eliminate:
after a nap, eating, drinking, and upon arising in the morning

Use the same spot every the time - identify it- identify a boundary- use wood or natural boundaries to show that "this" is the area

Use a word to encourage - it then will become a command, wait till it begins to eliminate, repeat the word till it is about to finish, reward

Asking to go out: Try a bell on the door knob. It rings every time the puppy is about to go out. Once the sound has been connected with the action of going through the door put a dab of peanut butter on the bell and have the puppy lick

it. The Bell rings. "Oh, you want to go out? Let's go!"

Crate train- the dog never has unsupervised access to the house. My rule with the crate is no more than one hour longer than the pup's age in months so a 14 week old puppy could go for 4 hours, maximum.

Take up the water 1.5 to 2 hours before bedtime. This is necessary for the puppy to be able to sleep all night without having to go out

If you catch the dog about to make a mistake:

1. clap your hands - "Yikes" or "OOPS" -the startle should get the puppy's attention

2. gently remove the dog to the approved potty place

3. reward appropriate elimination

4. Mistakes- clean it up - remove all odor

5. No punishment for the dog - you were the one who goofed. . . If you want to roll up a newspaper and bonk yourself with it- OK. . . no punishment for the pup. It has to relieve itself!

6. Record the mistake - perhaps you need to amend the schedule

7. Clean up the area and do a final wash with an enzymatic cleaner (Nature's Miracle or other brand) which will remove the odor completely. . . Not remove the order so you can't smell it- the human nose is feeble compared to a dog's. . .remove the odor so a dog can't smell it! The odor is the message to the pup where to go--- They smell it and that's the message, "Oh, this must be the toilet"! (We look for the bathroom. . .they smell for the place)

8. Paper training makes housetraining harder- The message is that it's OK to soil in the house. IF you paper train, know that it will make eventual housetraining harder and take longer- It will require a longer time and more patience from you.

9. Concrete run makes housetraining harder- remember you are "surface training" the pup- It will look for the appropriate surface (the kind of surface it has used in the past) That's why they like the rug. . . it's similar to grass!

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