

The Potty Training Tracker

A house-training workbook with logs, routines, and troubleshooting for the first months at home

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

A printable workbook for house training. It explains the core principles, gives you logs for every potty break and accident, and helps you spot patterns, troubleshoot setbacks, and know when to ask your veterinarian.

Part of The New Puppy Survival Kit.



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Start with the principles, then use the logs daily. Review your progress every few weeks.

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START HERE

Teaching a puppy where to go

House training is one of the first skills most owners worry about, and it is also one of the most predictable. Puppies rarely “decide” to go indoors. They simply have not yet learned where, when, and how to go outside, and their bladders are small.

This tracker gives you the logs to see patterns, a simple routine to build around, and practical guidance for setbacks. It works best alongside a consistent schedule. Your puppy’s daily planner is in *The Puppy Daily Planner*, if you have it.

FIVE PRINCIPLES THAT CARRY THE WHOLE PROCESS

- 1 Take your puppy out often.** Young puppies need frequent trips, especially after waking, eating, drinking, and playing.
- 2 Go to the same spot.** Scent helps puppies recognise their toilet area, so use the same outdoor place each time.
- 3 Reward the moment they finish.** A treat or praise within a second or two shows them what you are rewarding.
- 4 Supervise, or limit space when you cannot watch.** Puppies have accidents when no one notices them going.
- 5 Clean up without punishing.** Accidents are a sign that the routine needs adjusting, not that your puppy did something wrong.

A NOTE ON ACCIDENTS

Scolding after the fact teaches a puppy to hide when they need to go, which makes house training harder. Calm, consistent routines work better than corrections.

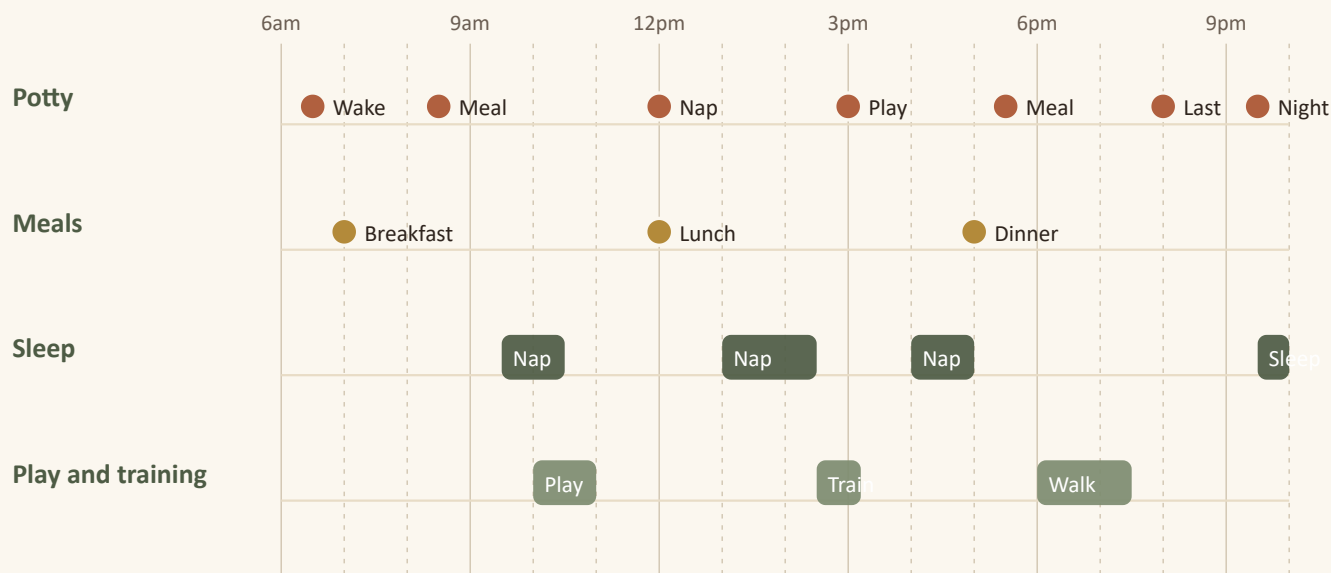
A ROUGH GUIDE TO HOW LONG A PUPPY CAN HOLD ON

A common rule of thumb is that a young puppy can hold their bladder for roughly one hour per month of age. Treat this as a loose starting point only. Some puppies need to go far more often, and every puppy needs a break after sleeping, eating, drinking, and play. If you are unsure, ask your veterinarian.

ROUTINE

Building a predictable rhythm

The goal is not a rigid timetable. It is a pattern your puppy can count on, so that trips outside happen before accidents rather than after them.



Hours of the day (example only, adjust to your puppy)

Example day for a young puppy. Each dot marks a likely time for a potty break. Adjust the times to fit your puppy and household.

HOW TO READ THE TIMELINE

Notice that potty breaks cluster around waking, meals, naps, and play. These are the moments when most puppies need to go. Once you can see that pattern in your own log, you can move the trip outside to just before it happens.

TRY THIS FOR A WEEK

Write down the times your puppy goes outside, then mark the events that happened in the 15 minutes before each one. A pattern often becomes clearer after a few days of notes.

POTTY-BREAK LOG

Potty-break log, sheet 1

Write down every trip outside, including the ones that produced nothing. A “nothing” result still tells you something about timing.

Time	Where	Signal I noticed	Outcome	Reward given	Notes

Outcome: write U for urine, S for stool, or N for nothing. Add a short note if the puppy strained, cried, or seemed unusually uncomfortable.

POTTY-BREAK LOG

Potty-break log, sheet 2

Write down every trip outside, including the ones that produced nothing. A “nothing” result still tells you something about timing.

Time	Where	Signal I noticed	Outcome	Reward given	Notes

Outcome: write U for urine, S for stool, or N for nothing. Add a short note if the puppy strained, cried, or seemed unusually uncomfortable.

DAILY TRACKER

Daily accident and success tracker

Use one line per day. Counting successes is just as useful as counting accidents, because it shows progress that the accident count alone can hide.

Date	Outdoor successes	Indoor accidents	Longest gap between breaks	Night accident? (Y/N)	Notes

WEEKLY REVIEW

Weekly progress chart

Fill this in at the end of each week. Look for a trend across several weeks rather than judging a single bad day.

Week	Average gap between breaks	Outdoor successes per day (average)	Indoor accidents this week	Nights without an accident	Trend: better, same, or worse

A slow trend is normal. Many puppies make steady progress with occasional setbacks, and progress is rarely a straight line.

OBSERVATION

Puppy signal observation sheet

Puppies often give small signals before they go. Noticing them early gives you time to get outside. Record what you see and what you did next.

Signal	Time seen	Where	What happened next
Sniffing the floor or a corner			
Circling or pacing			
Walking away from you, or going quiet			
Squatting or lifting a leg			
Going to the door or looking at it			
Whining, barking, or restlessness			
Right after waking up			
After eating or drinking			
After play or excitement			

If you write a signal you have not listed, add it in the blank rows. Every puppy has a slightly different pattern.

CLEANUP

Accident cleanup checklist

A tidy, calm cleanup helps the puppy move on. Lingering odors can also draw a puppy back to the same spot.

- ☐ Stay calm. Do not scold, point at the mess, or drag the puppy to it.
- ☐ If the puppy is still going, gently interrupt and take them outside to finish.
- ☐ Blot up as much liquid as you can with paper towels or an old towel. Do not rub.
- ☐ Clean the area with an enzymatic cleaner made for pet urine. Follow the label and test on a hidden spot first.
- ☐ Avoid cleaners that contain ammonia. They can smell like urine to a dog and may encourage repeat marking.
- ☐ Let the area dry completely, then check it for lingering odor.
- ☐ Note the time, place, and what happened just before in your tracker.
- ☐ Check for anything unusual: blood, unusual color, straining, or repeated small amounts. Contact your veterinarian if you see these.

KEEP CLEANING SUPPLIES CLOSE

Keep an enzymatic cleaner, paper towels, and a bin with a lid near the main accident areas, so cleanup is quick and does not turn into a search.

ROUTINE WORKSHEET

Household routine worksheet

Agree on the routine with everyone who lives with the puppy. A puppy trained by three different people on three different schedules learns more slowly.

Time (approx.)	Activity	Potty break?	Who takes the puppy out?	Notes
	On waking			
	After breakfast			
	Midday			
	After each nap			
	After play or training			
	Early evening			
	Before bed			
	Overnight (if needed)			
	Anytime the puppy shows a signal			

Write in the times you actually follow. A realistic routine you keep is far more helpful than an ideal one you cannot manage.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Troubleshooting common setbacks

Most setbacks come from a gap in timing, supervision, or space. Work through the “check” column before deciding that training is not working.

What you see	Things to check	What to try
Accident soon after coming back inside	The break may have been too short, or the puppy may not have finished.	Wait outside a little longer, quietly. Reward the moment they finish.
Accidents when no one is watching	The puppy had access to a space you could not see.	Limit space, supervise more closely, or use a leash indoors. Use a crate or pen only for short periods, and only if it is the right size.
Puddles during greetings or excitement	Excitement urination is common in young puppies.	Keep greetings brief and low-key, and take the puppy outside first. Avoid scolding, which can increase stress.
Accidents at night	The puppy may need a break before bed, or may not yet have full bladder control overnight.	Adjust the last trip before bed. If night accidents continue or get worse, ask your veterinarian.
Hesitating to go outside	Weather, surface, or something unfamiliar can make a puppy hesitant.	Try a familiar surface, a leash, and a quiet few minutes. Reward as soon as they go.
Sudden accidents after weeks of success	Medical causes can look like a training problem.	Contact your veterinarian, especially if you see other changes.

HEALTH

When to contact your veterinarian

Accidents are usually a training issue, but changes in how a puppy urinates or passes stool can point to a medical problem. This tracker is not a diagnostic tool, so please speak with a veterinarian if you are worried.

CONTACT A VETERINARIAN PROMPTLY IF YOU NOTICE

- ☐ Straining to urinate, or trying repeatedly with little or no result
- ☐ Crying out, or signs of pain when urinating or passing stool
- ☐ Blood in the urine, or urine that looks unusually dark, cloudy, or strongly smelling
- ☐ Frequent small urinations, or sudden changes in how often your puppy goes
- ☐ Diarrhea that continues, vomiting, or changes in stool that concern you
- ☐ Sudden accidents after your puppy was reliable, especially with changes in drinking or energy

SEEK URGENT CARE IF YOUR PUPPY CANNOT PASS URINE

If your puppy strains and produces nothing, appears to be in pain, or seems very unwell, contact a veterinarian or emergency clinic right away. Do not wait to see if it resolves.

Bring your completed logs to appointments. Dates, times, and the amount or pattern of accidents help your veterinarian understand what is happening.

REVIEW

Progress review

Complete this page every two to four weeks. It turns your logs into decisions about what to keep, what to change, and what to ask.

Date reviewed _____

Puppy's age (weeks or months) _____

Average number of outdoor successes per day _____

Longest stretch without an accident (day or night) _____

WHAT IS WORKING WELL

WHAT I WILL CHANGE THIS PERIOD

QUESTIONS FOR MY VETERINARIAN OR TRAINER
