

# CRATE TRAINING

Crates are a useful tool when training a dog. We want the dog to like their crate so they will use it for sleeping or housebreaking, or when they might need to be left alone and unsupervised. The crate should be a comfortable and safe place for your dog. They will seek out their crate to relax and it will see it as a safe place to go if there is a situation they are uncomfortable with.

## Plan Summary

The following set of steps offers you a plan to familiarize your dog with their crate. You may want to repeat these steps several times before moving on to the next one.

- Leave the crate door open. Throughout the day, at random, leave treats at the back of the crate.
  - **TIP:** If possible, drop treats when your dog is not in the room. Once the treats are gone, throw in some more. Do this throughout the day.
- Lure your dog into the crate, then reward them with a treat. Let them exit at will.
  - **TIP:** When your dog goes in to get the treat, they will typically come back out almost immediately. Once they start staying in crate spontaneously, you can move to the next step.
- Lure your dog into crate. Give them treats, with a time interval of about one second apart, until they leave the crate at will.
  - **TIP:** You want to make the crate magical, so to speak. Eventually, treats will stop just appearing in the back of the crate; your dog's going to have to stay in the crate if they want the treat.
- Use a hand signal to beckon your dog into the crate. Give them treats, with a time interval of about one second apart, until they leave the crate at will.
  - **TIP:** You must use a hand signal for this one — don't lure them. If your dog doesn't go into the crate, wait until they go in, and only then do you start giving them treats. After they leave, don't reward them — just keep repeating this step, adding time to the wait between treats with each repetition.
  - **TIP:** If and when your dog exits the crate, use the hand signal to start again.
- Use a hand signal to beckon your dog into the crate, then once they're inside, close the door halfway. Feed the dog and then let them exit at will.
- Let your dog into the crate, then close the door for the following time intervals:
  - Two seconds

- Three seconds
- Five seconds
- Ten seconds

After each interval, feed your dog and then let them exit at will.

- Make the crate comfortable with bedding, and once your dog is inside, give them a chew or a toy and close door. Hang out next to crate (reading, watching TV, etc.) for 10 minutes. Drop treats in every 20-30 seconds.
  - Repeat this, but occasionally get up and leave room for a few seconds.
- Close the door to the crate for the following time intervals:
  - 30 minutes, giving your dog a treat every two minutes
  - One hour, giving your dog a treat every three to four minutes
  - Two hours, giving your dog a treat every five to 10 minutes
- Leave dog in their crate with their chew/toy while you leave for the following time intervals:
  - 30 minutes
  - One hour
  - Two hours