

CREATING A HOME FOR YOUR PUPPY

Many people go to great lengths to select the right puppy. They speak to breeders, go see puppies, read books, etc. They purchase their puppy, bring it home without considering a very important fact; creating a home for the puppy.

The results of not making a home for your new puppy are well known. The puppy has free run of the house, leaving messes in inappropriate places, shredding the newspaper, chewing books, eating juniors homework assignment, munching on your best shoes or sometimes snacking on the leg of the chair or the sofa. Alternatively the puppy runs loose in the backyard, continuing his playful antics and then wanders over to the neighbors, who under no circumstances appreciate his messes left behind or his puppyish behavior. At night the puppy is brought inside and locked in the bathroom for the night. All goes well until he decides that the bathroom cabinet is good to chew, or the towels rip up real easy and the owner gets tired of cleaning up the messes every morning.

Puppy proofing your home is much the same as child proofing. The difference being is the equipment required to do so. Owning a puppy can be a fun thing with a minimum of hassle if you do four things before you bring your puppy home.

1. Purchase a crate.
2. Purchase or make an outdoor kennel run.
3. Fence in part or all your yard.
4. Build a dog house in the kennel run.

By preparing in advance for your puppy, it benefits the puppy much more than the owner. The puppy learns where his home is - the crate, the kennel run, the fenced in yard. These things remain constant as the puppy matures. These are the places that the puppy can play and sleep and the puppy comes to regard these things with a positive attitude. This allows the owner to confine the puppy in a specified space without it being seen as punishment. Most breeders will require that you have a fenced in yard or kennel run before they will sell you a puppy. They can usually recommend the people who can install these things for you. They can also tell you the best type and size of dog crate to purchase. Their knowledge and experience is worth listening to.

THE DOG CRATE

There are two types of crates, one is made of wire grating and folds up for storage, the other is made of fiberglass or heavy plastic and is usually approved for shipping on airlines or on trains. Both sets of crates have advantages and disadvantages. The wire crate allows greater ventilation, is usually a bit smaller, it will have a door in the side or in the front, it allows the dog a greater field of vision and is slightly lighter than the plastic. The wire crate does not shelter the dog from the elements - ie. sun, rain, snow, it cannot be used if you have to ship your dog, depending on the wire gauge it can be bent easily out of shape. The heavy plastic crate's principal advantage is that most of the ones available are approved for shipping. It does a good job of protecting your dog from the elements. The disadvantages are, it is slightly heavier and larger, and has less ventilation. If you decide to buy a crate, your best bet in the long run is to purchase the heavy plastic one. A crate can also be an invaluable too in housebreaking your new puppy.

THE KENNEL RUN

The most common kennel run, is the one made out of chain link fence with a door at one end. There are two types, the one that is permanent and the other that is portable. If you plan on moving or wish to change the location of the run the portable kennel run is the preferred choice. The height of your fencing is determined by the size of your dog, German Shepherds, Siberian Huskies, must have a six foot fence. With the toy breeds you can usually get away with a four foot fence. The length and width must be more than adequate for the dog to get enough exercise and not have to run through fecal matter as it exercises. If you work all day, the outdoor kennel is invaluable. It offers more protection to your dog than a fenced in yard. The outdoor kennel can be locked, and it lessens the chances of the dog getting loose or stolen. Puppies can and will cause havoc just from sheer boredom.

FENCING YOUR YARD

Having a kennel run and a fenced in yard may seem ridiculous. There are many instances where having that extra enclosure has saved the life of someone's pet. If you have a fenced in yard the dog can be allowed out for a good supervised romp. Having the kennel run, allows you to mow the lawn, spray with pesticides, plant your flowers, without having to lock your dog up in the house. The choice on whether to use chain link or welded wire is sometimes a matter of economics. Chain link is more durable and by far the better choice. The disadvantage is it

is more expensive. Chain link is permanent, where in most cases welded wire is portable. Both kinds of fencing do a good job and are far superior to wood fences.

THE DOG HOUSE

You must have a dog house in kennel to provide shelter from the rain, wind, snow and cold weather. The size is determined again by the size of your dog. You should locate the dog house in the direction that is least likely to catch the wind or rain. There are many different designs available for dog houses. Which ever one you choose, the dog must have adequate shelter from the elements.

SUMMARY

By now you are realizing that equipping your house for your new puppy. Purchasing the crate, fencing, dog house and kennel is expensive. However, these things are important and will benefit everyone in the long run. The ultimate enjoyment you will have with your new pet, will make the expense worth it.

CONSIDER THE ALTERNATIVE!