

Housebreaking a Rescue/Shelter Dog



Housebreaking a rescue dog or a dog from a shelter is the same process as for a puppy or a dog re-homed from one home to another.

I wanted to give it a little extra attention because that may be what is required of you – a little extra attention and patience.

The size or age of the dog does not mean that it is housebroken or that it has the slightest idea of what it means to be a part of a family. It can mean larger messes to clean up if we don't start the process of housebreaking immediately.

Do not scold them for doing something that has been required of them previously – eliminating in their kennel. If a dog has spent months in a shelter environment, they have had to pee and poop where they also eat and sleep. They don't have a choice. You will be working to correct this. They will get it. It just takes time.



Some shelters only have the space and money to do just that – provide shelter. The dog will most likely not come equipped with good house manners. Unlike a re-homed dog or a puppy, they may resist confinement until they feel safe and assured that they are not being abandoned.

They can still be crate trained, but take it slow! Very slow. Put a bed in the crate and give them a few toys while confined. Do not close the door immediately. If they completely resist a crate, put them in a small room and again give them a bed and toys.

Make sure that the crate or where the dog is confined is located in the same room as the family. If not, then keep the dog on a leash next to you. It is very important that socialization go hand-in-hand with housebreaking.

The Truth About Housebreaking

They need to be made a part of the family immediately. They may be attention deprived or timid about affection. Be patient and with love, structure, and consistency, they will soon learn that they live inside and will much prefer going potty outside.

