

Puppy crate-training plan

A comfortable place to rest, introduced one small step at a time.

Dog: _____ Date: _____ Helper: _____

01 Make a safe resting space - Choose a crate with room to stand, turn, lie on their side and stretch comfortably. Put it near family in a cool, quiet spot. Secure the door open; provide water and safe bedding. Remove collars and harnesses before crating.

02 Let your puppy choose - Scatter tiny treats near the entrance, then inside. Reward voluntary steps in and let your puppy leave freely. Feed meals near or inside the open crate only where they are comfortable. Never push or shut them in to make them adjust.

03 Introduce the door - After relaxed entries and resting with the door open, move it slightly, then reopen. Build to closing and latching for a second or two while you stay beside them. Reward calm behavior and open before worry starts.

04 Add one small challenge - First increase comfortable closed-door time. Later try one step away, then a brief moment out of sight. Change only one challenge at a time; mix easy repetitions with harder ones. Practice in short sessions and stop while things are going well.

05 Meet puppy needs first - Offer a toilet trip before crating and promptly after release. Keep nighttime sleeping nearby at first, and respond to toilet needs. Young puppies need frequent breaks, company and activity; a crate is not an all-day childcare plan.

06 Respond, then reset - If your puppy whines, check toilet needs, comfort and fear. Do not leave them to cry until exhausted. For distress, calmly end the session and make the next attempt easier. Persistent distress needs help from your vet or a reward-based professional.

Always remember: The crate is never punishment or a cure for separation anxiety. Do not force a panicking dog to stay inside. Test toys and bedding under supervision; remove anything chewed or swallowed. Keep fresh water available. Use a pen or safe room if appropriate.

Practice log | Repeat comfortable steps; shorten the session if worry appears.

Date / time	Door closed / distance	Relaxed signs / concerns	Next easy step

Sources: [Cornell Veterinary Medicine - crate choice and distress](#) | [Dogs Trust - gradual crate and pen training](#) | [Wisconsin Humane Society - crate training](#)

General training guidance. Read the full guides and safety notes at [Dog Days Training & Printouts](#).