

# Fehr Meadow Farm

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## House Training Your Puppy

Goldens love to be outside. They are usually easy to house train. We strongly recommend crate training since it takes advantage of a dog's instinct. Dogs in the wild live in a den. The den provides a wild dog protection from predators and the elements. It provides them a great deal of security and psychological satisfaction. All dogs, therefore, have a strong natural tendency to seek out this type of shelter.

In your home, your dog has no such place to call his own. Therefore he makes feeble attempts to curl up under the coffee table, chair, or in corners. By giving them back their den, we take advantage of natural instincts and quickly house train, control chewing, and actually raise a more well-adjusted, more self-confident dog, while keeping him safe from just about anything.

Simply start from early puppyhood and have the little guy sleep and rest in his home. Almost without trying, he will train himself to seek security and comfort inside his little dog 'room'.

Buy a metal crate large enough for your dog when he grows up. This gives him adequate room to go in, turn around and lie down. If the home is too big when your pup is small, box off one end for a while. Otherwise, your pup may designate one side as "bedroom" and the other as "bathroom".

Some families choose to purchase a smaller crate with the understanding that they will purchase a larger one later or make a different provision for their new family member. If you decide to do this, we recommend an 24 inch crate measured from front to back. Often you can borrow this size crate from family or friends.

I recommend that during all unsupervised times, you simply close the door and he stays in his home. During the times when someone can supervise him, have him out to play and train as much as you like.

The idea behind the crate-training theory is that while a pup is inside his home, he will not want to urinate or defecate. This is nature's way of keeping the home clean.

**Keep in mind that a young puppy, up to the age of about 16 weeks, will mess his crate because he doesn't have the mental or physical ability to control himself.** Just keep cleaning the crate when accidents happen and he will eventually catch on.

Sometimes it helps to take the 'accidents' outside to the area where you want him to eliminate. The scent of a few of them in the area aids him in comprehending how that area is to be used. Understand that little puppies have to 'go' at least every 2-4 hours when they are young.

Set up a schedule or use the one provided to establish a consistent routine. For the first few days, when you are taking your pup out of the crate to use the potty (ie. first thing in the morning, after a nap), make sure to carry him outside and to the designated place in the yard. Otherwise you may find that the pup will pee as soon as he or she exits the crate.

After a few days, teach him the route to the door, praise him at the door and take him out. Very quickly you are teaching him an elimination schedule that will stay with him the rest of his life.

As the pup gets older (4-6 months) you can gradually leave him in his home for longer periods and he will 'hold it' longer. As an adult, you will probably just leave the door open all the time. Now your dog is trained and he will like to have access to his home when he wants. Trained in this manner, dogs have less behavioral problems, are more secure and confident, easier to obedience train and can stay calm when boarded.

Sometimes families ask what to do about training during the night. We feel that taking the pup out to have a break during the night probably does help the pup to learn more quickly but not all families are set up to do mid-night runs to the yard. At our kennel, we have trained pups both by taking them out or by cleaning up accidents in the morning. Either way, the pups have eventually learned. At this point, we only take pups out when a normally quiet pup starts whining in the wee hours.