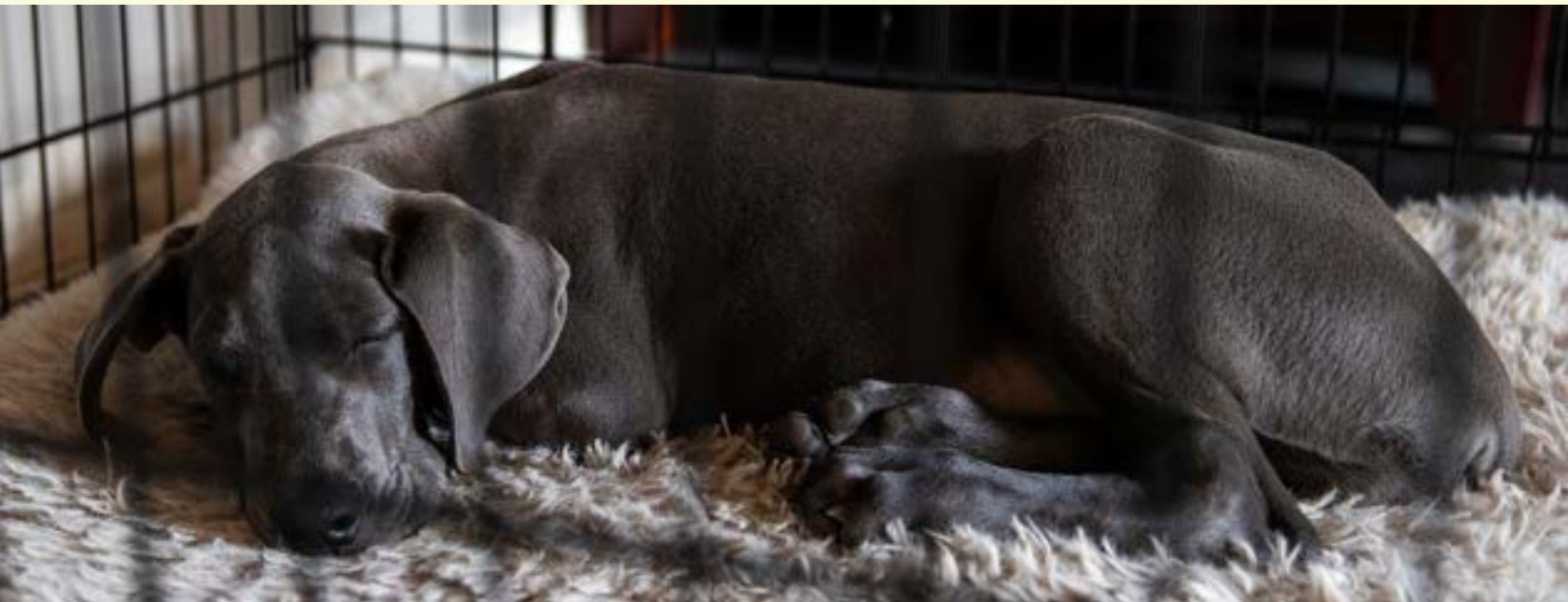


GIVE YOUR DOG A SAFE SPACE



WHY CRATE TRAINING WORKS



Your dog sees your family as their own and your home as their den. For many dogs, too much space can feel overwhelming, leading to stress, confusion and unwanted behavior.

A properly introduced crate changes all of that. It becomes your dog's personal sanctuary, a calm and secure retreat that taps into their natural den instinct.

A crate is one of the most effective tools a dog owner has during the training process. It helps with toilet training, reducing destructive behavior, and helping your dog feel safe when left alone. The key is patience, consistency, and making every experience with the crate a positive one.

HERE IS WHY CRATE TRAINING WORKS:

Supports Toilet Training ▶ Dogs naturally avoid soiling where they sleep. A properly sized crate encourages your puppy to hold it until you can take them outside, which builds consistency and speeds up the house training process.

Prevents Destructive Behavior ▶ Puppies and young dogs explore the world with their mouths. When you cannot supervise, a crate keeps your dog safe and your home intact, preventing chewing, counter-surfing, and other unwanted habits from forming in the first place.

Eases Separation Anxiety ▶ When introduced gradually and positively, a crate becomes a place of comfort rather than isolation. Familiar bedding and toys help your dog feel secure when left alone and can go a long way toward reducing stress-driven behavior.

Helps During Travel and Vet Visits ▶ Crate-trained dogs tend to be much more relaxed in the car, at the vet, and even during air travel. Having a familiar home base helps them adjust to new environments with greater confidence and calm.

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TEACHING YOUR DOG TO USE A CRATE

1. Place an old sweatshirt or blanket on the floor of the crate as bedding. Handle or wear the item first so your scent is present. That familiar smell will help comfort your dog from the start.
2. Create a cozy, den-like environment by draping a cover over three sides of the crate and leaving only the entrance open. Be mindful of airflow so it doesn't get too warm inside. In warmer weather, a lightweight dark sheet works perfectly.
3. Start the introduction with no pressure. Place toys, treats, and even food and water inside the crate with the door open and let your dog investigate at their own pace. Offer calm praise when they choose to go in on their own.
4. Begin closing the door once your dog is comfortable going in and they are occupied and settled. Many dogs will simply take a nap. It may take three or four days for them to fully relax.
5. If your dog whines or shows signs of stress, don't let them out while they're still unsettled. Wait for a moment of calm and quiet before opening the door. Responding to whining teaches your dog that demanding behavior gets results.
6. You can gently guide them in on a leash if needed, once your dog has had several positive experiences with the crate. If they resist, stay calm but firm and do not yank the leash. Threading the leash through the back of the crate can help guide them forward, a little encouragement is usually enough.

DON'T HAVE A CRATE? NO PROBLEM. JUST START SOMEWHERE.

A dedicated dog bed or a small, safe room can give your dog a sense of security while you work toward crate training. Any consistent space your dog can call their own is a step in the right direction. When you are ready, a crate is still the best tool for the job.

CRATE TRAINING GUIDELINES

A crate should never replace diligent training and supervision. It is a tool to support the process, not a shortcut around it.

- Crate training meets two of your dog's needs—safety and shelter. If other needs such as exercise, mental stimulation, and social interaction aren't being met, using a crate can create new problems rather than solve them.
- Dogs should not be left crated for more than 4 to 8 hours at a time, depending on age and bladder capacity. If extended confinement is necessary, use a small, puppy-proofed room or another safe and restricted area instead.
- Choose a crate that fits your dog properly. It should be just large enough for them to stand up, turn around, and lie down comfortably, but not so large that they can use one end as a bathroom. For puppies, look for a crate with a divider panel so you can adjust the size as they grow.

NEVER USE A CRATE AS PUNISHMENT.

It is your dog's safe space. Using it for time-outs can create fear and stress, undermining its purpose. Instead, always associate the crate with calm, comfort, and positive experiences.

CRATE TRAINING FEEL CHALLENGING?

Your Local Bark Busters Trainer Can Help You Avoid Setbacks And Make the Crate A Positive, Trusted Space For Your Dog