

AVERSION TO CRATING

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pasadenahumane.org/behavior.

Some dogs have had negative experiences with the crate in the past. If this is the case, the process of introducing the crate to your dog may take longer. It is important to remember to proceed slowly. For every negative experience your dog has had, it may take up to 15 positive interactions to make a new association.

Instructions

Follow the steps below to help your pup feel more relaxed in a crate. For each level of this treatment plan, repeat until your dog willingly and excitedly does what you ask of them at least 95% of the time.

All exercises should initially be performed with you sitting in a chair immediately adjacent to the crate. Once your dog is very comfortable going all the way in the crate for treats or even eating dinner with you sitting in a chair, repeat the steps with you standing next to the crate. Then gradually move further away from the crate until you are in a different room.

1. Begin by tossing a small (size of an eraser head) special treat near the kennel as close to the crate as your dog will eagerly eat the treat. Do this 8-10 times to encourage the dog to approach the crate. Repeat this process a minimum of 3-4 times per day or as frequently as you have time to practice.
2. Once your dog is excitedly moving toward the treats and not worrying, start tossing the treats just inside the door of the kennel.
3. Next, start tossing the treats further into the kennel so that your dog must enter the kennel to eat the treats.
4. Once your dog is excitedly and willingly entering the kennel, start saying 'bed' or 'kennel' before tossing the treat in the kennel. Start giving them something that takes longer to eat once they go into the kennel, such as a large milkbone, dinner, or a food puzzle toy. This is to help ensure they stay in the crate for a few seconds.
5. Sit in front of your dog's kennel (with the door open) while they eat the treat (they are not allowed to take the treat out of the kennel). They can leave the kennel if they choose, but not with the treat.
6. Once your dog is comfortable eating in the kennel, start moving the door so that it makes noise.
7. Next, start closing (but not latching) the kennel door.
8. Next, start latching the kennel door while sitting in front of the kennel.
9. Lastly, start moving further and further away from the kennel while your dog is in it.

(over)



10. Practice this skill on a regular basis-at mealtimes, when it is time to go on a walk, when you want to give your dog a treat, etc.
11. The next step is to gradually move further and further from the kennel while your dog is in the kennel, working up to you being able to stay in another room for 20 minutes.
12. The final step is to start exiting your front door, once again going back to 'no' time, exit, and immediately re-enter the door, working up to 30 minutes of time.

We are always here to help! You can find additional behavior and training resources at pasadenahumane.org/behavior.

Adapted from Northeast Animal Shelter



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