## 8 Week House Training Programme

#### Always remember that you are housetraining, not housebreaking. Breaking implies punishing the pup for toileting in the wrong spot. Training is helping the puppy do it right.

You will need: a properly sized crate; a collar and lead; treats; poop bags; time and patience.

**Week One:** Acclimatise your puppy to his crate on his first day in your home, off and on all day. While you do this, take him outside on his lead to his designated spot every hour on the hour. When he obliges you with a pile or a puddle, tell him “Yes!” in a happy tone of voice and feed him a piece of treat.

Pick up his water after 7:00 pm to prevent him from tanking up before bed (later if it is very hot), then crate him when you go to sleep.

The crate should be in your bedroom so your puppy is not isolated and lonely, and so you can hear him when he tells you he has to go out. When he cries in the night, you must get up (quickly), put him on his lead and take him out to his spot. Stand and wait. When he starts to go, say “go wee!” or “hurry up!” or whatever verbal cue you ultimately want to use to ask him to go to the bathroom. As soon as your pup has eliminated, tell him “Yes!” in a happy tone of voice and feed him a bit of treat, praise him, then take him in and put him back in his crate. No food, no play, and no bed-cuddling.

First thing in the morning, take him out on lead and repeat the ritual. If you consistently go out with him, on lead, you will teach him to use the designated spot for his bathroom. If you aren’t too worried about your pup using a particular spot in the garden then there is no need for the lead.

Now you can feed your puppy and give him his water bowl, but be sure to keep him right under your nose. Ten to 15 minutes after he is done eating, take him out again, repeat your command when he does his thing, and treat and praise when he is done.

Also take him out upon the completion of any exuberant play sessions, and whenever he wakes up from a nap. For the rest of the day, take him out every hour on the hour for his toilet ritual, as well as 10 to 15 minutes after every meal. The remainder of the time he must be under your direct supervision, or on a lead or tether, in his pen or in his crate, every second of the day.

**Week Two:** Continue crating your puppy at night. During the day, continue to take him out immediately upon waking, 10-15 minutes after each meal, and after play and naps.

You can now begin teaching him to associate “getting excited” behavior with going out to potty. This will eventually translate into him getting excited to let you know he has to go out. Stretch his bathroom excursions to 90 minutes apart.

**Week Three:** Crate your puppy at night. During the day, try stretching his bathroom intervals to two hours, still remembering to take him out after all meals, play sessions, and naps. Now the verbal cue will begin to actually elicit the behavior. By the end of this week, your puppy should be leading you on his lead to the bathroom spot.

**Week Four:** Crate your puppy at night. Stretch daytime intervals to three hours, plus meal, play and nap trips. Go with him to his bathroom spot off-lead to confirm that he is going there on his own, without you having to lead him.

**Weeks Five-Eight:**

Keep crating your puppy at night. Gradually increase the time between bathroom breaks to a maximum of four hours, plus meals, play, and naptime. You still need to go out with him most of the time, but you can occasionally send him out to his bathroom spot in his fenced yard all on his own.

At that point, you can break out the champagne and celebrate – you and your puppy have come of age!