

Homefield K9 Training

<https://homefieldk9training.co.uk/>

Phone: 07950 208187



House (Toilet) Training

It's easy to find articles and posts about house-training puppies, not all with good advice, so these are some of the tips that helped me with Ember when she came to me.

✓ **A good start** by the breeder is a huge help - I'm really lucky that when Ember arrived, she was already in the habit of using a particular surface, in this case straw.

If possible, add a similar surface to what they've been used to in preparation. Before we got back from the breeder, I'd set up a large tray of straw just outside the back door.




Puppy Pads: I never use these now – although they can be useful if you live in a flat and it's not so easy to take your puppy out regularly, the drawback to pads is that you're teaching the pup that they can toilet indoors – then, at some point, you're going to have to re-teach them that now they can't. If at all possible, I recommend avoiding these and training for the long-term.

Take them out frequently - after eating, drinking, playing, waking, and in between, watch for signs such as circling with nose to floor and take them out immediately.

If your pup hasn't toileted for about 20-30 mins, take them out anyway and offer the opportunity.

Note: **take out, not let out.** If you're there, you can praise immediately and offer a treat. One of the most common errors is to leave the door open and pup to come and go. It took Ember about 2 days to realise that if she weed in the tray then presented herself at my feet, she would get a reward. Sometimes she would go a second time, and even a third, almost straight after - I still rewarded. It meant she was learning what worked!

 The only accidents in the first few days were one wee on the day we got home and nobody was paying attention for a second, and on day 2 when I picked her food bowl up after a meal and went to wash it before taking her out. Then on day 8, when I was starting to get a bit complacent, the first indoor poop. My fault entirely - user error!

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When these happened, nothing was said to her at all; it was cleared up and we got on with the day. So, peeing on the kitchen floor, while rewarding for her in the sense that it relieved her bladder, wasn't as rewarding as peeing in the straw box and getting praise and a treat.

😬 I was annoyed with myself that we had the three accidents; all could have been avoided if I'd been paying attention, and the less they 'go' in the house, the less likely it is to happen. But we're all only human and it only takes a few seconds to miss the signs; I didn't worry about it - it just reminded me to be more vigilant!

😊 Cues: my cue for toileting is different to that of the breeder, but Ember had still started to recognise it by day 2 or 3. As she was finishing a wee, "Good quickly!" By day 4, "Quickly!" if said near the box, resulted in her hopping in and peeing on cue. I still use this cue with both dogs when I need them to go, for example when arriving somewhere or last thing at night.

😴 Overnight, Ember slept in a crate beside my bed, so I heard her as soon as she woke. For a couple of months, she would wake for a wee most nights at about 2.30am 😴. Her little bladder wasn't yet developed enough to reliably make it through a whole night (although some puppies manage it - both Lyric and Sonnet slept through the night from 8 weeks, which was amazingly lucky.)

The benefits of having her close enough to hear straight away were that there was no risk of her having an accident in the crate, and that, because I took her out quickly and quietly, she didn't have time to wake up too much and want to start playing. Brief wee then back into the crate and back to sleep!

