Wee, poo, well done you!

Every puppy has accidents, and toilet training takes weeks (sometimes months) rather than days. Keep it simple, stay patient and make going outside the best thing ever.



1 Set an alarm, little and often

Young puppies can need to go as often as every 15 to 30 minutes at first. Set a phone alarm, take them out after waking, eating and play too, then stretch the gap bit by bit as they get the hang of it.

2 Learn their signals

Sniffing the floor, circling, wandering off or suddenly stopping play usually means they need to go. Calmly scoop them up and head outside.

3 Same spot, same word

Go to the same patch each time and stay with them. Say a cue like "be quick" as they go, and they'll soon link the two.

4 Celebrate outside

Praise and treat the moment they finish, right there outside (not when you're back indoors). A quick game afterwards stops outside feeling over in a flash.

5 No fuss about accidents

Never tell them off or rub their nose in it, as it teaches them to hide when they go. Clean up with an enzyme cleaner so the smell doesn't draw them back.

6 Night-time trips

Most young puppies can't last the whole night yet. Set an alarm for a quiet trip out, keep it boring with no play, and stretch the gap as they grow.

7 Puppy pads, if you use them

Pads can help in flats or overnight, but they can mix the message. Stick to one type, keep them near the door and move to outside only as soon as you can.

8 Going backwards is normal

Plenty of puppies wobble around 4 to 6 months, or after changes at home. Go back to basics with more trips and more rewards, and keep beds and sofas off limits for now.

Check in with your vet if

- they're weeing much more often than usual
- they strain, or seem uncomfortable when they go
- you spot blood in their wee
- a puppy who was clean suddenly starts having lots of accidents

Sometimes accidents have a medical cause, so it's always worth ruling that out.

This guide is general advice for new puppy owners. Every puppy is different, so if you're ever worried, your vet is the best person to ask.