

Crate-training Your Pet
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*An important way of preparing your pet to cope with emergencies
in comfort and safety!*

1. Get a sturdy crate for each pet (dog or cat) that is the right size. Remember, it's a "sleeping bag", not a hotel room! Garage sales are a great place to find crates. Check for an easy-to-work latch. If the crate is used, clean and rinse it thoroughly. Put an old folded towel inside the crate.

2. Leave the crate on the floor with the door open, and let the pet check it out. When he's sniffing it, you should praise softly (but don't pet him). Don't just stuff him in and slam the door!

3. At mealtime, put the pet's food dish just outside the open crate door. Leave it there for no more than 10-15 minutes.

If your pet seems fearful of approaching the dish, move it a foot away from the open crate.

4. Wait until your pet is comfortable eating here. Then, at the next meal, set the dish just inside the crate so that the pet can stand outside, but has to poke his head in to eat.

5. When the pet is comfortable eating this way, at the next meal, move the dish one inch towards the back of the crate. Continue to move the dish when the pet is comfortable. Never move the dish during a meal.

6. When the pet is comfortable eating out of the dish when it is at the back wall of the crate, and he is entirely in the crate, close the door gently while he is eating.

7. When he is comfortable with the closed door, send him into the crate with a treat just before meals while you prepare the food.

8. Start putting him into the crate for brief periods when you are not feeding him. The best time to do this is when he is tired. You can put a sweaty t-shirt of yours in to make it smell familiar.

9. It's best not to leave water in the crate. If you must, use a spill-proof dish that fastens onto the door or wall of the crate. Otherwise, it will just make a mess. Don't leave chewies in, either.

11. Most puppies will become comfortable with a crate very quickly. Don't keep a pup in a crate any more hours than he is months old - he can't hold on much longer.

12. Some cats prefer to go into a bag, which can then be put into a crate with the zipper open.

10. Always praise your pet and/or give a small food treat when he goes into the crate!