



Introducing Your Foster Dog to his Crate “His Man/Woman Cave” in a Positive Way

Your foster dog or FTA/newly adopted dog has most likely either lived outside their entire life, or in a kennel and is just not accustomed to having a safe place to call his own.

Before introducing your dog to his crate remember this –

CRATES ARE NOT CRUEL. Remember, dogs are naturally den animals. They normally take to crate training very naturally, if you take care to properly set up the crate and introduce your dog properly.

It is important for your new dogs safety and the safety of your home to make the crate a comfortable den like area for your pet to go and relax, sleep, chew on a rawhide or lick a Kong with peanut butter and to just have some down time when you need to do other things and cannot watch your dog.

- Make sure the crate is large enough for your dog; they should be able to lie down, turn around and stretch out.
- Make the crate is comfortable with a soft blanket or bedding and cover the crate to create a den like atmosphere (man/woman cave) for your dog.

Introductions (Say hi to your little man/woman cave my furry friend):

- Have your dog on a leash. Have a tasty treat in your hand (hopefully your dog is treat motivated, hot dogs are a great treat and are irresistible to most pups).
- Walk your dog to the crate and say “inside” – don’t worry if they don’t go inside at first.

If your dog does not go inside, walk away from the crate with your dog and then walk towards it again. Gently put the leash in the crate so the dog will have to follow. If they put the brakes on, take your foot/leg and scootch him in using the force of your foot/leg. Again, don't worry if he comes back out each time he goes towards it or sniffs and looks in; reward your dog with a tasty treat.

- Once in, don't let him bolt out, squat down and block his/her exit and provide the tasty treat. Once they are more calm and relaxed, lead him out by the leash.
- Keep repeating the step above until your dog goes in willingly. When the dog goes in, say good boy/girl and provide the treat. Say, OK, and now gently pull him out of the crate. (Repeat until they go in on their own).
- It's important during all of this that you breathe and remain calm and be a leader, dogs pick up on your body language and moods very easily.
- Again, once the dog is in, don't let him bolt out, squat down and block his/her exit and provide the tasty treat.

Little do you just know that you have successfully introduced your dog to a crate.

- Repeat, repeat, repeat (repetition is the key) the above step again, and when the dog goes in, reward him with the treat.

(If he pops back out... don't worry, just keep repeating. We want the dog to realize nothing bad is going to happen when he is in there, but that something good happens, he gets a treat!)

NOW – try shutting the door:

- Once your dog goes into the crate, now shut the door. Give your dog a moment to sniff and look around, provide the treat, and then open the door (BUT DON'T LET HIM RUN OUT YET). If he moves to bolt out of the crate, shut the door on them and tell them "Wait."
- Open the door slightly again, and if they move, shut the door again and tell them "wait."
- Open the door again while saying "wait" and give him another treat and then gently pull the leash and say OK.
- Repeat again (as many times as you and your dog need to become familiar) and then shut the door and walk away.

LETTING YOUR DOG OUT OF THE CRATE:

This part is as important as the introductions. When you go to let your dog out, he could become excited and start wagging his tale, bumping around – **WAIT** until he calms down before you let him out. At this time, if he is anxious or excited, **DO NOT LOOK OR TALK TO HIM**. Walk

away from the crate if he does not settle down, or stand calmly by the crate and wait for him to calm down and don't talk or look at him until he is calm.

- Once your dog has calmed down. Open the door slowly – if he tries to dart out or bust out, shut the door and/or block it with your leg and try again. Open slightly, if he is settled and calm, open the door, but stand in front of the opening. **ONLY ALLOW HIM OUT ONCE HE IS CALM.**
- At this time, you can attach his leash and take him right outside for a potty break (this also helps with potty training as well).

Crating is necessary to keep your home safe from accidents (since most of our dogs are learning where to go potty, and it keeps your new foster dog safe from getting into something that he shouldn't).

Please don't hesitate to call Lyn Cianflocco @ 301-751-8156 or email lcianflocco@comcast.net with any questions you might have, or post on the **HSCC Dog Foster/FTA Group Page** and ask any questions you may have.