

How Long Is Too Long To Crate Your Dog?

Pet Pro Supply Co.

If your puppy or dog is hyperactive, or you have to leave your pet at home alone and they aren't house-trained well, [a dog crate](#) is a great solution. But, if you leave your dog in their crate for too long, it can cause behavior problems. There is just no substitute for playtime and training. Leaving your dog in their crate too long can ultimately undermine a crate's effectiveness as a training tool.

The Benefits Of A Crate

A crate can help your dog feel secure, calm and comfortable. By their very nature, dogs are extremely unlikely to soil the area where they sleep. Because of this, crates are a great help with potty-training your dog too. If you have a dog that frequently has accidents in your home and is not picking up house-training easily, a crate will help you avoid this issue.

Crates are also invaluable for hyperactive dogs, giving you an easy way to calm them down. Most dogs, when put in a crate will immediately calm down and in turn, they'll become much more receptive to your training.



Crate Time For Puppies

Puppies have a harder time holding their bladders than their older counterparts, so when you crate your puppy, you want to lean towards the side of “too little” time in the crate. Opinions differ on the

exact amount of time, but the Human Society has released information suggesting that if your puppy is under six months old, they shouldn't be left in a crate longer than three to four hours.

Others have created formulas, such as "leave puppies in their crates by taking their age in months and adding 1" (e.g. a 4-month-old puppy can stay in a crate for up to 5 hours).

When it comes down to it, you have to get to know your puppy, monitor their behavior and over a few weeks' time, figure out what their personal limit is.

Crate Time For Adult Dogs

Most adult dogs can stay in a crate for about half a day as long as the dog gets ample exercise and walks when he or she is out of the crate. Many adult dogs can manage eight or so hours in a crate while their owners are at work, but longer than this can often cause behavioral problems. If you work long days, it's recommended that you either hire a dog walker to come once or twice a day to let your dog out of its crate and take it for a walk or consider doggy daycare in lieu of crating them.

Risks of Overusing Your Crate

It cannot be emphasized enough: when you overuse your dog's crate, it undermines its training utility. For instance, if your dog has an accident in their crate, it may lead them to have more accidents elsewhere. This means there is nowhere you can safely leave your dog without risking an accident.

In addition to this, if you leave your dog in the crate too long, they may start to resent the crate. This means it will be very hard to get them into it, they won't feel relaxed and calm when they are in the crate and they can develop aggression issues, or even worse, health problems.

Crate Training Tips

To maximize your dog crate's effectiveness, place the crate in a location your dog loves to be. Drop a fistful of treats in the crate or give your dog a bone or other chew toy. Leave the door open at first to help get them used to the crate. Then, gradually start closing the door. Make sure you place the crate in a location where the temperature is nice, and most importantly, you have to make sure your crate is the right size for your dog. A dog should be able to easily stand up, sit, lay on his side and turn around in the crate.

Most importantly, *never ever use the crate as a punishment*. If you decide to punish your dog by putting them in their crate, you can cause your dog to fear the crate.

Check out [Pet Pro Supply Co.'s extensive collection of dog crates!](#)