



Teach your dog to ring a bell

Housetraining some dogs can be especially challenging because they do not learn to clearly signal when they need to eliminate. Teaching a dog to ring a bell when it needs to go outside can be a huge help when housetraining. It takes time but is relatively simple if you follow the following steps:

- Purchase a small bell, and set it near the door through which you usually take your dog out for elimination. Ring the bell immediately before opening the door to go outside with the dog. Your dog should already be leashed so that you can step outside with him/her as soon as you ring the bell. Do this every time you take your dog outside for several days. Allow your dog to only explore the designated elimination area; otherwise your dog may associate ringing the bell with play time instead.
- Next, suspend the bell at the height of your dog's nose right next to the door. Gently touch the bell to your dog's nose, causing it to ring every time you take him/her outside. Repeat this step for several days.
- At this point, depending on how quickly your dog makes associations, he/she may begin approaching the bell on her own when he/she needs to eliminate. If he/she doesn't, smear a little bit of cheese or peanut butter on the bell each time you prepare to go outside, and use this to lure your dog toward the bell. Allow your dog to lick the bell, causing it to ring, and then praise your dog as you take him/her outside.

Once your dog begins ringing the bell on their own, you must take them outside every time so that they learn making the bell ring reliably predicts being allowed outside.