



# Greyhound Rescue West of England

## THE INDOOR KENNEL OR DOG CRATE

An Indoor Kennel is a crate that can be made of wood, plastic or metal, or a combination of these. However, metal is preferable as it is indestructible and easy to clean. Metal crates normally fold up when not in use and are easily portable. Many have a plastic tray in the base so that during training any soiling does not leak on the floor. The Kennel needs to be big enough for the dog to have enough space to stand up, turn around and lie down. Indoor Kennels are not at all cruel if used properly and are of an appropriate size. It can help the dog fulfil its natural need to have a den of its own.

Dogs in the wild will find either a cave or dig a small-secluded pit in the ground, in which to sleep or just relax, away from the world. The crate will become his Den – it will be a safe place for your dog to be – it is his retreat from the world. It is a safe place to leave him when you are out until he is housetrained and can be trusted not to destroy your home. Even after he is trained and trusted, you may find him curled up happily asleep in it if he has free access to it. The crate should never be used as punishment.

We would suggest that initially the crate be positioned in a well-used family room. This means that you have to make comparatively little effort when training the dog to use the crate. Once accustomed to it you will find your dog will settle happily in it where ever you put it. In the case of a newly adopted dog, the crate should be used until the dog understands the house rules and until you feel you can trust him. If you are using the crate because the dog is suffering from separation anxiety, we would suggest that you use it on a long-term basis. The dog will grow to like the cage and look for it in its moments of need.

In the first instance set the crate up in a well-used area of the house - the lounge or the kitchen are good places. Leave the door of the crate open, put a comfortable blanket or bed inside. Let the dog wander in and out, and have a general explore. Do not force the dog. If he is reluctant put a few treats just inside the door. See what happens. Do this throughout the day. Progress to putting treats further into the cage - watch what happens. Do not rush things - take it slowly. Praise the dog when he makes moves in the right direction, make a fuss of him when goes in fully. Once the dog will happily go in and out of the crate, you can begin to add a command.

The next step is to start feeding the dog in the crate. Once he has had several meals in it think about closing the door whilst he is eating. He is unlikely to kick up if his tea is there! Do not let him out while he is making a fuss. If he thinks crying means that you will let him out, he will do it all the time. Only let him out when he is quiet. In the beginning try to keep the time brief so he is caused little or no distress. Gradually lengthen the time as you do when you leave a dog. When leaving him, always make sure that he has got something nice to do that he has had a good amount of exercise and has been to the loo. Your dog will try very hard not to go to the loo in the crate but if you leave him for too long he will have no choice. Do not blame him if he has an accident.

You will find that in time, if you leave the crate with the door open, he will begin to use it when he fancies a snooze, or he has taken something and wants to escape from you or when he just wants some quiet time! In fact, given the opportunity, many dogs will choose to use them as their sleeping quarters even when fully house trained and in such cases the door need not be secured.

For more help and advice please visit [www.grwe.com](http://www.grwe.com) or call our 24 hour help line on **07000 785092**