

Why Does My Dog Piddle When I Come in the Door?

Submissive and Excitement Urination

By Brenda Howard

Ok, your puppy is making wonderful progress in house training. He's learning to hold his bladder and beginning to understand that the restroom is outside. Excellent! So what's up with submissive and excitement urination? Doesn't he know better?

The answer is no, he doesn't know better. Your puppy is doing what comes naturally to him. Most puppies will show their submission by rolling over or by wetting a tiny bit. This is an instinctive response and should not be punished. It is the ultimate show of respect to you.

Submissive urination in an adult dog is generally an indication that the dog is insecure. Often unsocialized or abused dogs will submissively urinate. Sadly, submissive urination may also be present in dogs that have been excessively punished or punished with bad timing (the dog is not making the connection between the punishment with the "bad" behavior). Poorly administered and excessive punishment can lead to a dog that is confused and frightened – he resorts to the only way he knows to show respect and fear - which is submissive urination.

It is best to ignore this behavior. If you try to reassure him, he will think you are praising him for urinating. If you scold him, he will feel an even greater need to apologize by urinating. Either reassurance or scolding will only make the problem worse.

Treat this problem by both ignoring the unwanted urination and by teaching your puppy or dog some very basic obedience skills to help build his self esteem and confidence. "Watch me" or "Sit" are very good exercises to begin teaching confidence. Always praise your dog for exhibiting behavior you like.

Excitement Urination

Some dogs urinate when they are excited. This happens when you come home or when you introduce your dog to a new person or another dog.

In puppies this is most likely a lack of full bladder control. The puppy is not aware that he is urinating and therefore any punishment will only confuse him. Since the puppy doesn't understand why you are angry, the excitement urination can

turn into submissive urination in an attempt to please you! OH NO!

The best treatment for excitement urination issues is to expose your dog to the stimulus that excites him many times so that the stimulus no longer excites him. For example if he exhibits excitement urination when you arrive home practice coming into the house over and over. Come in and ignore the puppy – don't even look at him for several minutes, then calmly acknowledge him by asking him to sit, "good boy!" Now leave and repeat coming back in and going away. Do this until you can see that your dog is no longer overly excited and is getting bored with this activity.

Most puppies will outgrow excitement and submissive urination once their bladder control develops. Remember to ignore all excitement and submissive urination. Never scold your dog when it occurs. If the problem does not resolve over time, consult your veterinarian to be sure that there is not an underlying physical issue or illness that may be contributing to your dogs urination problem.

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