

# **THE WISDOM OF LIFETIME CRATE TRAINING**

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*"No horse gets anywhere until he is harnessed.  
No stream or gas drives anything until it is confined.  
No Niagara is ever turned into light and power until it is tunneled.  
No life ever grows great until it is focused, dedicated, disciplined."  
Author: Harry Emerson Fosdick*



Crate training has always been a point of contention and a very emotional subject for many dog lovers. The idea of putting a puppy or dog in a "cage" comes across as cruel and unnecessary. In truth, crating is only inhumane if you resort to using a crate as a place of punishment or a long-term parking space for your puppy but using the crate in the right way is the kindest thing you can do for your Tibetan Mastiff!

## **Promoting Responsible Dog Ownership Practices For a Lifetime**

- Dogs are den animals with a pack mentality. The immediate and long-term use of a crate helps to establish natural order and the marriage of these two elements. It is instinctive and necessary that the pack leader, the owner, dictates his wishes to the rest of the pack. By placing your puppy in a crate at a designated time and under certain circumstances, you establish control over his life. You immediately teach him that you expect order and discipline.

- By assuming the leadership role, you remove any pressure that forces your puppy to make decisions on his own that he cannot reasonably be expected to make.
- Most owners are not dog trainers or behaviorists and most people do not intuitively know how to handle or react appropriately to their dogs in times of elevated stress or troublesome behavior. The continued proper use of a crate encourages puppies to grow to be sound adults who understand boundaries and manners.
- You can feel good about the fact that you have provided a personal space for your dog where he can go when he wants his own sense of security and privacy. Crate-training promotes the development of a well-rounded dog and confident, well-behaved dogs naturally know when to take a break from it all.

### **Lifetime Benefits**

- The crate can give you peace of mind when you are forced to leave your dog alone, for whatever reason.
- Since a puppy is less likely to eliminate in his own den space, housebreaking is accomplished much quicker when puppy is restricted to a small area such as a crate. You can be assured that you won't come home to "accidents" on your brand new living room carpet.
- You can rest easy knowing that your kitchen cupboards, expensive/heirloom furniture, cherished items or other loved pets are safe from a playful, bored, stressed or anxious puppy.
- What a reassuring feeling to know that your dog is safe from harm! He won't be able to get into any products or situations that could be fatal to him.
- The crate can be used as a training tool in other areas. For example, greeting and introducing strangers to your guardian breed will be more pleasant if crating strategies are employed with your dog.
- Lifetime crating practices create less havoc and tension should you decide to welcome more dogs into your home at a later date.
- It is much easier to keep an older puppy/adult rested and comfortable after medical procedures such as a spay/neuter or in the case of recovery time from injury or other surgeries throughout his lifetime.

### **The Advantages of a Home Away From Home**

- Being placed in a moving vehicle can mean an anxious time for many Tibetan Mastiffs so traveling is made less stressful and is much safer with the use of a crate. If your dog is unused to car rides or if he feels a particular loss of control by being in a vehicle, he may interfere with your driving. Many TMs like to take an active role as the wary "backseat driver." Your dog may fret, loom over your shoulder and drool, or struggle to climb over or between the seats to get to the passenger's seat.
- We all like to think that we will arrive at our destinations without incident but should a traffic accident occur, your pet is less likely to be injured or allowed to escape from your vehicle if he is confined.
- Your dog can travel anywhere with you without feeling threatened or unprotected since you can bring his home with you.

## **Sabotaging Your Chances of Crate Training Success**

Remembering these simple rules will help guarantee that your crate-training lessons are successful.

### **Rule #1**

The crate belongs to the dog and it is his home. Teach everyone to be respectful of your dog's personal space. It is his living room, bedroom and, perhaps, his dining room all rolled up in one. Never allow other pets inside your dog's crate. Never allow children to commandeer a crate. While it might be the perfect size, a crate is not a dollhouse, playhouse or the ultimate hiding spot.

### **Rule #2**

Letting puppy out when he/she cries. Not being consistent and dedicated to making your puppy comfortable with the crate is a sure way to make the puppy more persistent in accomplishing the opposite!

### **Rule #3**

Ensure that your puppy is comfortable in his crate as he grows. Make sure that he associates his crate with praise, food, treats and safe toys. Be mindful of his physical growth and don't allow him to become cramped in his space.

### **Rule #4**

Never use the crate as a place of punishment. Learn coping and management techniques when your Tibetan Mastiff behaves inappropriately.

### **Rule #5**

Do not overuse and abuse! Many people like the idea of having of dog but their lifestyle is not conducive to spending time with a dog on a daily basis. The crate can never take the place of your human companionship. Ask yourself how many hours a day your prospective puppy will be required to stay in a crate. More than 4-6 hours a day in the crate (over and above sleeping in it at night) is excessive and not recommended. Measure the long-term consequences for that prospective puppy against your short-term wishes. Extended periods of uninterrupted confinement are simply not what a Tibetan Mastiff needs.