



# ADVICE SHEET 4

# Using an Indoor Kennel



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## What is it?

The most popular and convenient indoor kennel is the fold down weld mesh type. These rectangular kennels come in all sizes, and because they are collapsible are easily transported. Fabric indoor kennels are also available, these are lightweight and brightly coloured but not suitable for destructive dogs.



## What size of indoor kennel should be used?

The indoor kennel should be long enough for the dog to turn around and stretch and high enough to sit up without touching the top. If you are buying for a puppy judge the size you will need by measuring an adult dog of a similar type. If in doubt it is better that the kennel is on the large side rather than too small.

## Using an indoor kennel

It is important that an indoor kennel is not used to punish or to house a dog for long periods at a time. When used correctly indoor kennels provide a safe, secure and private area for your dog. Your dog must be taken out regularly to exercise, play and go to the toilet.

## A suitable place for the indoor kennel

The indoor kennel must be placed in a family area where your dog can see everything and not feel left out.

Whilst in the kennel your dog should

have comfortable bedding, water and a suitable chew toy.

Make sure the indoor kennel is away from direct heat and cover the top, back and sides with a sheet to give the kennel a cosy, secure, 'den' feeling. The sheet also helps prevent drafts.

Place your dog's bedding in the indoor kennel and encourage your dog to explore the kennel by throwing tasty food treats in it. DO NOT close the kennel door.

Repeat over a few days until your dog is happily going in and out and choosing to go in the kennel to rest. When you reach this stage you can begin to close the door to the kennel for a few minutes at a time.

If your dog remains happy and relaxed you can gradually increase the length of time your dog spends in the kennel in each session. Remember at this stage you should stay in the room.

The first time you leave your dog alone, make sure he or she has been

well exercised and then leave your dog in the kennel with a hide chew or safe toy for a few minutes whilst you are out of the room.

Gradually increase the time your dog can be left, up to a maximum of three hours (which is the maximum time your dog should be left in an indoor kennel).

Your dog must accept you reaching into the kennel but make it very clear to children (and adults) that the kennel is your dog's den and not a playhouse.

If your dog is introduced gradually to the kennel and you make every encounter pleasant you should not experience any problems. Indoor kennels can be a useful training aid and provide a safe, portable home when traveling or staying in hotels. Never frighten or shout at your dog in the kennel and do not use it to control behaviour problems without the guidance of a qualified behaviour counsellor.