

# Submissive & Excitement Urination

## *Puddle Patrol*

It's normal for dogs to urinate when they become excited or when they want to demonstrate submission. Even a dog that is otherwise housetrained may leave dribbles and puddles of urine at your feet and on the floor when greeting you.

**SUBMISSIVE URINATION** is the ultimate show of respect and deference for higher rank. Dogs that urinate submissively are insecure and usually have not been shown that there are more acceptable ways to show respect, such as paw raising (shake hands) or hand licking (give a kiss). Other dogs submissively urinate because they feel the need to constantly apologize. This state is often caused by excessive or delayed punishment which frightens and confuses the dog without teaching him how to make amends. The dog resorts to the only way he knows to show respect and fear, by urinating.

When your dog urinates in this manner, it is best to just ignore him. If you try to reassure him, he will think you are praising him for urinating and will urinate even more. If you scold him, he will feel an even greater need to apologize by urinating.

Treatment must be directed towards building your dog's confidence and showing him other ways to demonstrate respect. The quickest way to accomplish this is by teaching your dog a few basic obedience exercises. A dog that can earn praise by obeying a simple routine of "Come here, sit, shake hands," will soon develop self esteem and confidence. A confident dog who can say, "Hello, Boss" by sitting and shaking hands does not feel the need to urinate at his owner's feet.

**EXCITEMENT URINATION** usually occurs in puppies and is caused by lack of bladder control. The dog is not aware that he is urinating, and any punishment will only confuse him. Since he does not know why you are angry, the excitement urination will quickly become submissive urination in an attempt to appease you. As your puppy matures and develops bladder control, the problem will usually disappear. However, in the meantime, it is probably a good idea to do something to help keep your puppy dry.

The best treatment for excitement urination is to prevent your dog from becoming overly excited in the first place. You can do this by exposing your dog to the stimulus that excites him, over and over until it no longer excites him. Most likely, your dog gets excited and wets when you return home. If so, simply ignore him for about 10 minutes. Don't even look at him.

Then leave again for a few minutes, return and ignore, leave, return and ignore. Keep doing this until you can see that your dog is not only unexcited, but is actually getting bored with the whole thing. If your dog gets overly excited when visitors arrive, have them do this too. When your dog has calmed down and is no longer excited when you come in, then very quietly and gently say hello. If any signs of excitement appear, quickly exit and repeat the coming-and-going routine. A rapid sequence of heel-sits will capture your dog's attention and channel his excitement to the game of heeling and sitting. Remember to ignore all excitement urination and never scold or get angry at your dog when it occurs.