



Things to Consider.....

Your puppy has just had a massive upheaval in its life, its mum and brothers and sisters have disappeared and it is in a totally new environment. Dogs are social animals that live in groups and an eight week puppy would never be alone. Firstly, being alone is not a part of what they are, and secondly the main behaviour puppies show in the socialisation stage of development is a following behaviour. They do this because they need to follow their family/pack around in order to survive as they cannot look after themselves. This is why they follow you everywhere! This behaviour disappears as they get older, bolder and more independent.

So, when you are trying to get your puppy to learn to be alone, you are competing with their genetics and survival behaviours; being alone at this age is dangerous and stupid.

Some puppies cope really well and others don't, this can be personality and also breed specific.

Many people will tell you leave them to cry it out and that they will get used to it, if you are lucky they will, but you have to question how that experience makes them feel about being alone.

Secondly, if they don't settle and they don't cope, then they learn not to cope and this is how separation anxiety can start, because they are repetitively experiencing stress when alone.

I don't worry too much about puppies being alone at night up till 12 weeks at least. I prefer to gradually be teaching this during the day, where I can get positive associations, and then build on duration in a structured manner rather than going for an eight hour stint on the first night at home.

I also like, and need, my sleep so I prefer the crate and pen set-up. Although I have in the past taken puppies to bed with me in a crate and taken them to the toilet in the night when they wake up.

If you want quick house training then really, they need to be doing it outside as much as possible from day one. Using pads and paper indoors can be very useful for limiting where toileting happens, however it is not teaching your puppy to go outside. If you are using these, you still need to work on creating outside habits and fading the pads.

It is really down to you to decide what is going to work best for you, your situation, and your home and lifestyle.

