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Should you
cover your
dogs crate?



Should your dog's crate be draped with a blanket, cardboard, sheet, or crate cover?

Whether you cover the crate totally depends on your dog. Some dogs love the security provided by a darkened, enclosed space, while others can feel anxious in a confined area.

Let's have a look at the pros and cons so you can decide what works for your furry best friend.



Pros & Cons

Pros

- A crate cover can help reduce anxiety and soothe dogs by limiting visual stimuli, which in turn can prevent excitement and barking.
- Easily excitable dogs are less likely to react to movement outside windows or in other areas of the building if they're in a covered crate.
- A closed cover at night can signal bedtime, and an open one may indicate that it's okay to play.
- A covered crate can be especially helpful on a road trip for a dog who is showing signs of being stressed by car rides, or while they're in an unfamiliar place with new distractions.
- Dogs are den animals who prefer the security of a secluded area—it's instinctive for our canine friends to search out an enclosed, dark space when they're scared or need rest

Cons

- Your dog may get very warm in the crate—great for shorter haired breeds that get cold easily, not so great for dogs such as Samoyeds. Keep blankets away from heat sources, ensure the fabric is breathable, and avoid using knit blankets that may snag or unravel. Monitor the conditions inside the crate in humid summer weather to ensure it doesn't get too hot. Brachycephalic breeds may be more susceptible to overheating, which makes airflow particularly important for them.
- Puppies go through a natural chewing phase. Between the ages of four and eight months, puppies may chew more than usual because they are teething. Puppies or dogs who are stressed can shred bedding and any blankets or covers within reach. If your dog is likely to chew, secure the cover to prevent her from pulling it into the crate and chewing or ingesting it. An airline-style plastic crate can provide similar comfort, without shreddable materials in your dog's reach. If you've crate trained correctly there should be no stress.



What type of cover is best for a dog crate?

Breathable, easy clean fabric.

If your dog spends time outdoors, a waterproof or insulated cover may be necessary, but won't be needed in a normal house.

You can purchase ready made crate covers, that can disguise an unsightly wire crate, but carefully tucked blankets or sheets will do the job just as well.

As discussed previously, take precautions to avoid chewing or shredding hazards for your dog.

Consider proper airflow to prevent overheating in Summer.

If your dog is sound sensitive, covering her crate with thicker blankets may reduce the noise in the crate. Though you can't fully soundproof a crate, it can help reduce unwelcome sounds from outdoor traffic, household appliances and, to a certain degree, storms.



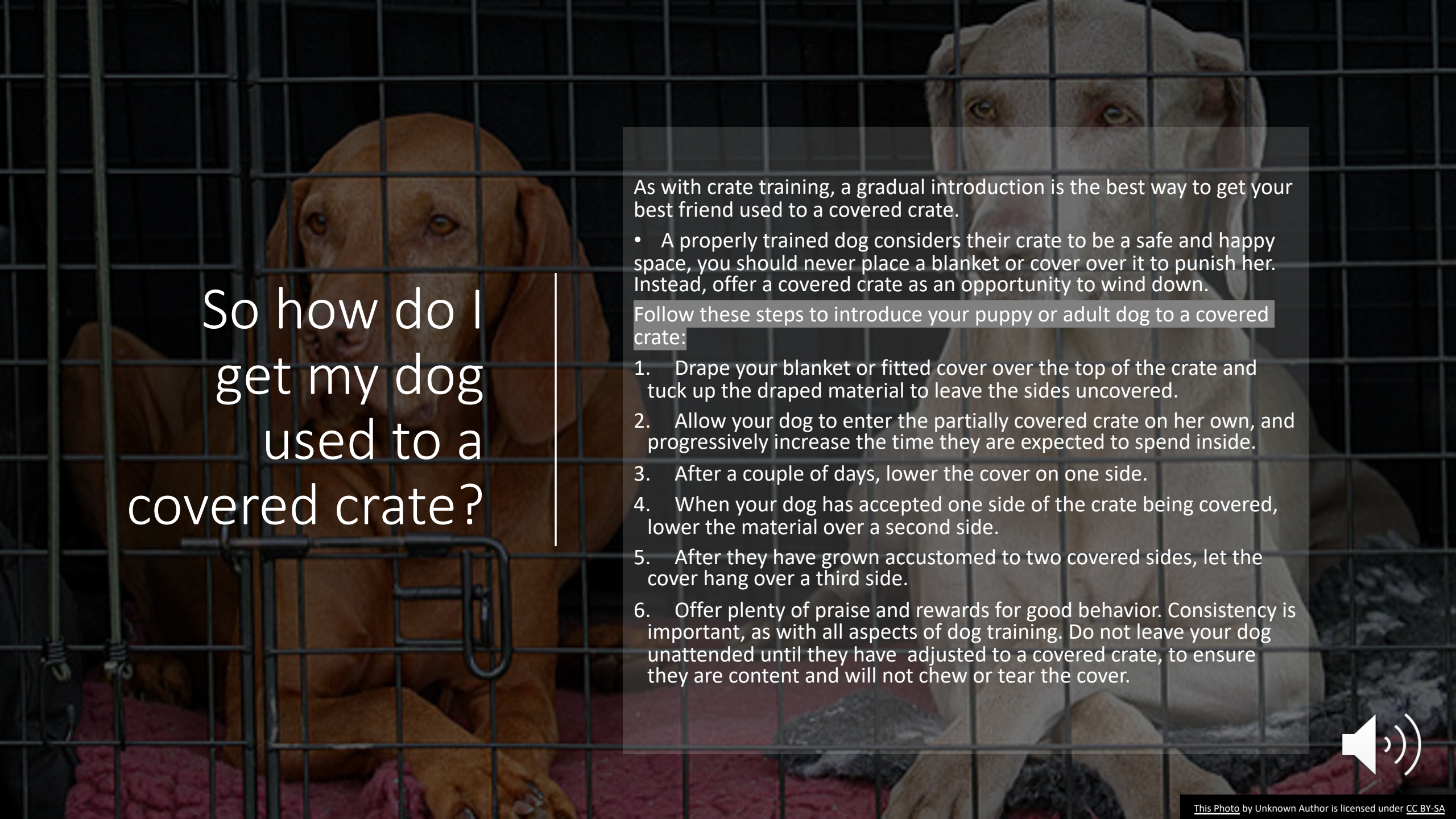
What if my dog doesn't like their crate being covered?

No Problem!

It's really important to observe your dog for any signs of anxiety if you're using a crate cover. Any hesitancy in being in the crate means that you have introduced it too quickly and your dog isn't wholly comfortable.

Not every dog appreciates being in a covered crate, and that's absolutely fine! Others relish their own covered den-its totally down to your dog. If it isn't benefitting your dog, leave it uncovered-their safety and comfort is the most important thing.



A background image showing two dogs in wire crates. On the left, a brown dog is sitting in a crate. On the right, a white dog is sitting in a crate. The crates are made of metal wire. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the dogs' faces being the primary light source.

So how do I get my dog used to a covered crate?

As with crate training, a gradual introduction is the best way to get your best friend used to a covered crate.

- A properly trained dog considers their crate to be a safe and happy space, you should never place a blanket or cover over it to punish her. Instead, offer a covered crate as an opportunity to wind down.

Follow these steps to introduce your puppy or adult dog to a covered crate:

1. Drape your blanket or fitted cover over the top of the crate and tuck up the draped material to leave the sides uncovered.
2. Allow your dog to enter the partially covered crate on her own, and progressively increase the time they are expected to spend inside.
3. After a couple of days, lower the cover on one side.
4. When your dog has accepted one side of the crate being covered, lower the material over a second side.
5. After they have grown accustomed to two covered sides, let the cover hang over a third side.
6. Offer plenty of praise and rewards for good behavior. Consistency is important, as with all aspects of dog training. Do not leave your dog unattended until they have adjusted to a covered crate, to ensure they are content and will not chew or tear the cover.

