

*This article was written for Eurasier but it applies for all breeds of dog.  
It was written after the author was discredited on the Yahoo Eurasier Community because she suggested to a puppy owner in Australia the use of a crate for the safety of its puppy when leaved alone at home.*

The Eurasier is a German breed.

In the past, many wrong interpretations were done about crate training for puppies.

It is important to understand all aspects of crate training prior to take any decision.

Here you will find the most valuable information about the pros & cons of crate training.

### Why crate training is not in accordance with the Eurasier's German philosophy?

The suggestion of crate training to a new puppy owner is not in accordance to the German philosophy of the Eurasier's ownership. German people explain that the Eurasier was developed as a companion dog and not as a working dog... So it doesn't need to be kept in kennel or crate.

Most of these people forget that the Eurasier is a canid and all wild canids live in a terrier. The terrier is impossible to do in our modern life style (inside home) for our companion. Who wants a den inside the kitchen? The crate can offer to the Eurasier its own terrier.

The crate used in puppy training can also avoid angry and frustration from the puppy's owner who comes back home to see damages caused by the puppy who chewed furniture or even done a hole in a wall! It is a secure place to put a puppy during the chewing period to avoid accident and emergency.

The crate is, in most of the time, the place an anxious dog will prefer to be when its owner is not at home. Anxious dogs will pee-poop-chew-bark-howl when alone because these activities help it to reduce its anxiety. Crate is a safe place for it and also for your furniture.



Mess caused by a young dog leaved alone in a kitchen.

Puppy x-pen can also be used. But if your puppy don't respect the x-pen (jump on it or over it) you'll need a crate. Puppy x-pen is a "fenced" area inside your home. Crates are available in many sizes and a big one can be as large as the x-pen but it as a floor and roof. The dog can't jump over it or move it.

When people work, this means for most of them that the dog will be alone at home. The use of a crate in this circumstance may be the best way for them. In our North American life style, most people work. Is this means these working people/family can't have a dog and specially an Eurasier?

I don't think working obligation could be the reason to not have a dog. I imported my very first Eurasier when I lived in a small apartment in Montreal and worked 35 hours weekly. The most important thing to consider when a prospective owner works is: what that new owner will do with its puppy (adult) when he will be at home? Will he invest lot of his time to educate, train, play, have positive interaction with his Eurasier? If the answer is yes, then he may qualify to be a good owner.

We have 24 hours in a day. Usually a working owner will be out of home about 10 hours daily (8 hours working, 2 hours traffic!). This means 14 other hours including 8 hours of sleeping are not invested to pay bills. If the last 6 hours are gave to the dog, then BINGO!  
Rare are, even all days home, owners who will invest at least 4 hours for their dog! It is why we have so much behavioural problems in dogs!

Having the dog(s) free inside home with us all day, doesn't means the dog(s) has positive interaction with us. We may pass all the day going here and there to do meals, housework, washing and to take our emails to finally invest only 1 or 2 hours on our dog(s).

### Why using a crate?

When people states that crate training is not appropriate for an Eurasier puppy, they directly suggest that most of the behaviour specialists around the world are incompetent... These specialists agree to the crate training use with puppies of all breeds.

Most people against crate training see the dog with a human eye. This vision is called "anthropomorphism". These people see the crate as a jail.  
Anthropomorphism is cultural and the way we learned to see the dog in our life.



On the opposite, education and training are connected to sciences. Trainers use different methods like: shaping, approximation and so. A crate is an educational tool used in puppy training, not a jail. The crate is a tool created for the safety of the puppy.

A puppy who chews furniture will develop angry and frustration from its owners... and this will develop inappropriate corrections and/or punishment. Imagine you just returned home from the market. When opened the door you saw the mess your puppy made during your absence. You'll be frustrated. Even you did not punish your puppy, it acted submissively because he smelled you were angry. This creates more anxiety in your puppy and may develop worst behaviour in a near future. I know an Eurasier puppy owner who came back home to see its dog made a den in the couch!

A puppy can hurt itself when it eats furniture or when it chews electrical cord. Nobody wants to come back home to find a dead puppy or to invest \$1000 and more in an emergency surgery!

The dog is not a bird and should not be kept in crate for long period!

This means a dog is not supposed to LIVE in a crate all days. This applies to all breeds.

A dog needs exercise and play time with its owner and family. It needs to be considered as a family member and have daily positive interactions with all family humans.



*Barnabie Reagan of Eurasia (Gipper) with his young owner.*

*Sugarok New Love of Eurasia with her young owner.*

The crate is an educational tool, but many adult Eurasiers will still go sleep in their crate by themselves. Doors are retired or opened and dogs go sleep in their *terrier* like their wild ancestor... the wolf.

A puppy and adult dog that knows what a crate is; will be less stressed if a boarding or a medical situation occurs. At the vet, the dog will be in a crate or in a kennel!

If a dog needs a surgery; if a dog needs to have low exercise for a short period after a surgery; the crate can be a great help for the owner of an active dog. In dog shows and trials competition, handlers use crates too.

A crate can be use in a car when we travel with our Eurasier(s). In case of accident, the dog will be safer in a Vari-Kennel than free in the car even if it wears a car harness!

If you own more than one “entire” dog (not neutered / not spayed), you should understand that all kind of hormonal change can disturb the leadership of your small pack and their dogs’ hierarchy. This may show up with a fight between two females or two males.

In my own experience, as a spitz type breed, Eurasier’s fights are really close to the wolves’ ones. Males’ fights are full of growls but fewer damages are done by their biting. When they stop, they turn heads and go lick their paws. . .

Females’ fights are much more destructive. Their biting is more aggressive. Less growls but much more biting and blood. . .

Depends of which female comes in heat, it can be wise to use a crate as a prevention of an eventual fight. A fight consequence can generate a big vet bill!

Many owners in Europe and North America contacted me  
to obtain advices after experimented similar situations.  
Here are two bad experiences that may happen any time in pet homes too!  
These dogs were not aggressive ones.  
They were friendly dogs in all circumstances except in female’s heat period.

- Breeder X contacted me because her 8 months male fight with her 4 years male. These were not neutered and one female in heat was around.
- Breeder Y contacted me because his two males, always friends until then, just had a fight. Both were brothers who always lived together.
- Owner X contacted me because her two females of 2 and 3 years had a fight. They always had fights a couple days prior she was able to see the first heat signs. . . Females knew that one will be in heat prior their human owner!
- Owner Y contacted me to have my advices on how to keep her dog safely. Her female always wanted to fight with the neighbour one.
- Breeder Z contacted me for advices when, for the first time in 10 years of breeding Eurasiers, she had to deal with a big fight between two females.
- Many breeders had accidental mating. . . even one breeder sold Westie-Eurasier mixed breed puppies and another one sold Husky-Eurasier mixed breed ones.

As you can see, a crate can be a really great help sometimes.

Accidental mating, fight, chewing furniture can be prevent only by the use of a crate.  
Too many Eurasiers are able to open room door!

## When we should use a crate?

A crate can be used:

- When no human is at home to prevent chewing of furniture... which happens usually during the puppy and teenager stages.
- When nobody can supervise the puppy... to prevent pee-poop on the floor and chewing furniture. Crate training helps to obtain a housebroken puppy faster.
- When you feed your puppy... for example if your puppy is distracted by other things in its environment, you can feed it in the crate the first days or weeks to focus it on the meal time.
- During the night... put the puppy's crate beside your bed is the best way to avoid waking up and put feet in pee-poop! Sleeping beside your bed the first weeks will also help your puppy to adjust to its new life best.
- When you go in car... car harness lets the chance to your puppy to chew the seat... not the crate.
- To prevent fight with some dogs when we are not at home.
- To prevent accidental mating.
- To keep a sick or convalescent dog.

No dogs can be kept 24 hours, 7 days a week in a crate!

Use it wisely...

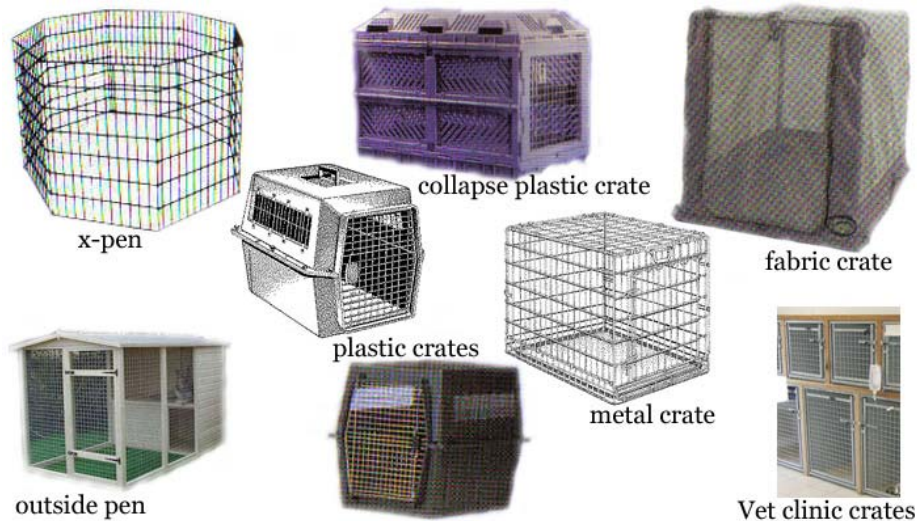
In vet clinics, dogs are putted in crates... and this may increase anxiety for a dog that was never crated. Crate training puppy helps to prepare the dog for this future eventuality.



*Black Motion Simba of Eurasia*

## Which crate to choose?

Here are examples of pen and crates :



Wire or plastic crate?  
Which one is best?

Plastic crate is available in different sizes and models. Some are more solid than others. Choose one with a metal door. For car, plastic Vari-Kennel is the best. It is the same used for flight travel. Plastic crate is easy to clean and the puppy feels like in a terrier because it has only few windows and a door to check.

Anxious dogs will much prefer these crates than wire ones because wire is all open!

Plastic crates can be chewed... it also takes more places in storage if you don't need it for a long period. But when the crate stops to be a necessary tool for your puppy training, the crate can be open and used as a bed basket.

Collapse plastic crate is definitively not easy to clean. I don't recommend it.

Fabric crate is not recommended for puppies. This crate is usually used by handlers in trials or conformation shows to keep their dog safe when not in the ringside.

Metal crates are not recommended to housetrain a puppy. If it pees inside, you'll have pee everywhere around. It is also more dangerous because the puppy can get caught in the wire walls.

Metal crate develops more anxiety in dogs than the *terrier* plastic one because all walls and roof are open. It also rusts and the lifespan is less than the plastic one. Metal crate damages many type of floors. Many dogs learn easily how to escape from a metal crate. I have plenty of “Oudinis” in my doggie obedience courses!

It is your own choice... but I will always recommend the Vari-Kennel or Furrari crates.

### What about size?

Your adult dog should fit in it!!!

It should be able to sleep comfortable in it and even stand up.

Actually, many companies offer wire separation available for crates (metal and plastic crates). When time comes to choose a crate for your puppy, buy the larger one with a movable separation. This way you'll be able to adapt the crate to the size of your puppy's growth.

Don't forget that it is much easier to housebroken a puppy with a small crate than a huge one! If puppy can have its bed, kitchen and toilet in the same crate... why he will ask to go outside to pee?

### Avoid all wire floor!!!

It can be very dangerous. Puppy's toes or nails can be injured by the wire floor and it will be more difficult to housebroken your puppy.

### What about pen?

X-pen can be useful but only on ceramic floor. On wooden ones, they will damage the floor. The bad side of x-pen is that the pen moves easily and there is no roof to keep the puppy in. Many puppies learn quickly to jump and go out! Or to move it closer to something they will chew. I know puppies leaved in a pen or metal crate that damaged wall with their nails.

Outside pen are used to keep a dog in a secure place when the yard is not fenced. In my vision, it is better to use outside pen than tie out a dog... Outside pen can be of any size and may or may not have a roof. If the outside pen doesn't have a roof, the walls need to be 6 feet high.

The minimal size (by adult dog) for an outside pen is 10 x 10 feet. If you have 2 or 3 dogs, you'll need a bigger pen.

## To resume

I will always recommend crate training for puppies. I use crate training for all puppies including Eurasiers since more than 20 years now. I understand the benefits of it and never considered crates as a jail. I never used crates as a punishment and my dogs are always happy to go in when I open a door.

The crate is the *doggie room* in our human home. My dogs are not crated all day long... They have access to running free on our property. They received personal affection and attention from me each days of their life. Not all dogs have a crate! I only have ones for dogs who need one.



*Black Motion Simba of Eurasia, Dancing Bear Ally to Eurasia, Vanille de NiouTchouang and myself.*

*Johanne Parent  
Eurasia reg'd*

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