

How to Clean a Dog Kennel

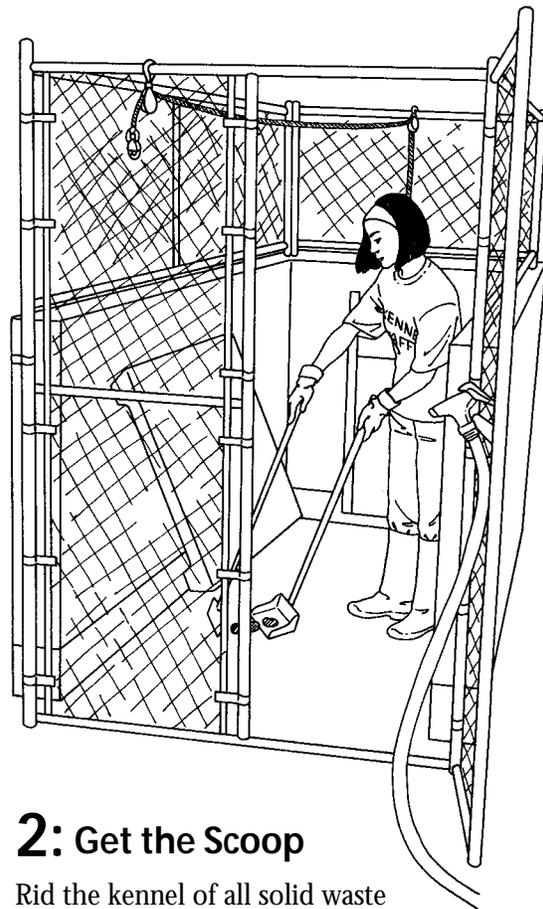
Like disinfecting a cat cage, cleaning a dog run is a relatively simple, everyday task. Do it correctly and you ensure your canine residents a healthier, less stressful stay. But do it incorrectly and you essentially put out a welcome mat for all the germs and bacteria that can make life miserable for the dogs—and for you.

Plan cleaning and other activities with "life-stage groupings" in mind: Clean the kennels of puppies first, adult dogs second, and sick or injured dogs last. Use a separate set of cleaning equipment for each life-stage group or thoroughly disinfect the items after every step.



1: Okay, Everybody Out

Before cleaning each kennel, place the dog in a clean, empty run or in a separate holding area. (The dog should never be left in the kennel while you hose it down.) Remove food and water bowls, bedding, and toys. Soak bowls in disinfectant according to label directions, then rinse and air-dry each item prior to reusing (or use a dishwasher to accomplish the same work). Clean blankets in a washing machine and keep toys with the same dog throughout his stay, then disinfect or dispose of the toys afterward.



2: Get the Scoop

Rid the kennel of all solid waste such as feces and hair. Then rinse the cage thoroughly with hot water.

3: Solution Dilution

Before applying the disinfectant, carefully read the product label and be sure to dilute disinfectants and cleaning agents according to the manufacturer's instructions. (Be especially careful to dilute bleach at 1:32—one part bleach to 32 parts water—and thoroughly rinse surfaces after its use because bleach may corrode metal cages, ruin clothing, and even irritate dogs' nasal passages and upper airways.) Then thoroughly apply the solution to all surfaces of the kennel.



4: Spic 'n' Span

Use a stiff-bristled brush to scrub the run from ceiling to floor, all walls and doors in between, and resting boards. Remember to also clean the walls of the run above the height of the dog inhabiting the run, because if any one section of the shelter is left unsanitized, disease can be easily transmitted. Don't forget to scrub and disinfect the fronts and backs of kennel doors, hinges, latches, and any surfaces between runs. The solution needs time to work its magic, so allow it to stand for the time specified by the manufacturer before you rinse.

5: Wet 'n' Dry

Thoroughly rinse all surfaces with a steady stream of water (preferably hot). Then dry the kennel as completely as possible using a squeegee and ventilation.



6: Back the Way it Came

After the enclosure is completely dry, add clean food and water bowls, bedding, toys, and lastly, a dog.

