



Whelping Box Worksheet Page 2

There are more things to consider when purchasing or building a whelping box than size and materials. Here are a few more things to consider before you make your final selection.

Sanitation and Cleaning

Cleaning and sanitizing the whelping box are the first line of defense against pathogen transmission. Be sure your box is non porous, is safe to sanitize with bleach or Rescue, and has very few textures, seams, etc that can trap body fluids, parasites, and dirt.

I plan to clean my box with: _____

I plan to sanitize my box with: _____

Is it safe to use these products together?

Pig Rail

Contrary to popular belief pig rails don't prevent dams from stepping on puppies (the size of the box does though!) but instead pig rails prevent puppies from crawling around behind the dam and being suffocated if she falls asleep and lays back, trapping the puppy.

Pig rails are very important for large breed dams and should be about 3 to 6 inches off the ground and 2 to 4 inches deep (depending on the size of the dam)

Pig rails are vital for puppy safety, should be easy to sanitize, clean, and be firmly attached to the box.

Pig rail can be removed when puppies are too large and strong to be at risk of crushing.

Bedding

Bedding is another important aspect of keeping puppies healthy and developing normally.

Bedding during whelping should be absorbent, easy to launder, or disposable. I use a combination of EZ whelp pads and disposable puppy pads.

Bedding after whelping should be arranged in 2 layers, flat, with zero "loft".

Top Layer: Non absorbent (moisture passes through) and easy for puppies to grip (I use the thick fleece DuraWhelp pad). Being grippy is vitally important for puppy development. If your puppies are sliding around the bedding is not textured enough.

Bottom Layer: Highly absorbent to absorb dam's discharge and puppies urine (I use disposable pee pads the day after whelping then EZ whelp pads)

Bedding should fit neatly from edge to edge, and have some manner of securing the bedding to the bottom of the box. Puppies who get under bedding are at a high risk of death from crushing or chilling.

Ensure bedding cannot be bunched up and puppies cannot get under!

Avoid comforters and other thick bedding, if the dam cannot easily feel a puppy she may lay on it and crush it.