

# The Stages of Labor

There are three stages to labor for dogs. The first stage is preparing the dog to go into delivery, while the second and third stages are active delivery.

## Stage 1: Preparation for Delivery

The first stage is the dog's body preparing itself for delivery and includes the early contractions (that aren't visible to our eyes). It can last anywhere from 6 to 24 hours. We often see changes like:

- Restlessness
- Nesting
- Refusing to eat
- Panting
- Trembling
- Vomiting
- Increased urination
- Clear, watery discharge
- Lactation

## Stage 2: Delivery of Puppy

The second stage is the actual delivery of the puppy. It involves visible, active contractions and straining. The first puppy should be delivered within 30 minutes of active contractions and/or the first sign of green discharge.

Your mama dog will move between stage 2 and stage 3 until all pups are delivered. She should deliver all puppies within 24 hours of moving into stage 2.

## Stage 3: Delivery of Placenta

For every puppy, there is also a placenta that should be delivered. There is a good chance mom will eat it, so it may be hard to keep track.

