

Socialization

Until they reach 16 to 18 weeks of age, a puppy will be in a socialization period. This period is the most important and critical in its life. Every effort should be made to socialize your puppy; meaning to expose him or her to a variety of positive and pleasant meetings. The greater the exposure you can give to your dog during this period, the more it will lead to improved social flexibility, emotional stability and trainability.

You must socialize your puppy to a number of different things; people, adults and children of various ages, animals and environments. Use the socialization table for ideas or for tracking your progress. Place a check mark beside the experience that your puppy has had the opportunity to add to his repertoire. Notice which spaces are blank and take your puppy out! The more experiences in its repertoire, the better equipped the puppy will be to socially deal with new situations. Take advantage of puppyhood, because after this period, socializing your dog will take longer and be much more difficult...

Remember that before the puppy has its second shot, the puppy's immunity won't be as strong. Exposure to only vaccinated dogs at this time is highly recommended.

An unsocialized puppy is likely to fear some people or situations. Fearful reactions are too often related to biting...

You have everything in your hands to prevent these alarming reactions...

Below is a socialization checklist for your puppy - Puppies should be exposed to all the items on the list with your direct supervision at the following frequency; **6 - 7 weeks, 7 - 8 weeks, 8 - 9 weeks, 10 - 11 weeks, 13 - 14 weeks, 15 - 16 weeks, 4 - 6 months, 6 - 9 months and 9 - 12 months.**

HUMANS: women & men

Young adults / adults
Elderly people
Disabled / infirm
Loud, confident people
Shy, timid people
Joggers
Delivery / wearing uniforms
People wearing hats
People with beards
People wearing glasses

CHILDREN

Babies
Toddlers
Juniors
Teenagers

ANIMALS

Adult dogs
Puppies
Cats
Small pets / birds
Livestock / horses

ENVIRONMENTS

Friend's house
Shopping centre
Park
School / play grounds
Day care
Country walks
Party
Slippery floor

Bus

Bridges
Tunnels
Elevators
Stairs
Veterinary practice
Groomer
Boarding kennels

OTHERS

Motorbikes
Bicycles
Breed related stimuli
Wheel chairs
Traffic