



PUPPY SOCIALIZATION CHECKLIST



Introduction & How to Use

Your goal with each item/person/sound/etc. on the checklist is to create a positive experience surrounding it **within the first 8-12 weeks of your dog's life**. Of course, try to avoid neutral or negative experiences.

One of **the** best ways to ensure positive moments is with reinforcers, especially treats and food. Specifically for the people section, try to get each type of person to pet, interact with, **and** give your dog a treat or two!

If your pup reacts with fear, over-arousal, or avoidance, take a step back and slowly reintroduce said person/object/item/etc.

Never rush your dog into situations that could overwhelm them. It's not a race!



PUPPY SOCIALIZATION CHECKLIST



People

- Women
- People of different ethnicities
- Tall men
- Men with deep voices
- Men with beards/facial hair
- Elderly people
- People in wheelchairs
- People who use canes/crutches
- People wearing hoods/hats
- People wearing helmets
- People wearing sunglasses
- People wearing a variety of colors
- People wearing backpacks
- Infants
- Crawling infants
- Toddlers
- Multiple toddlers playing loudly
- People running
- Homeless people
- Teenagers

Animals

- Other puppies
- Adult dogs
- Large breeds (Great Dane, Mastiff)
- Very small breeds
- As many breeds as possible
- Cats
- Horses
- Other livestock like cattle
- Pet birds
- Hamsters, pet rats, etc.

Surface Types

- Concrete
- Artificial grass/turf
- Slick floors (linoleum, hardwood)
- Stairs (carpet and concrete)
- Wet grass
- Mud and dirt
- Icy areas and snow
- Metal surfaces (vet scale, etc.)
- Uneven terrain and rocky areas



PUPPY SOCIALIZATION CHECKLIST



Handling/Touching

- Outside of ears
- Inside of ears (not into ear canal)
- Outside of mouth area
- Inside of mouth area (be gentle)
- Back teeth
- Eye area (be careful)
- Paws
- Nail areas specifically
- Pinching skin
- Grabbing tail
- Nose
- Holding in arms
- Holding on lap
- Wiping body with towel
- Wiping paws with towel
- Wiping face with towel
- Handling by collar
- Putting on collar/harness
- Being brushed/combed
- Hugging/squeezing puppy softly

Sounds

- Other animal sounds (goat, pig, etc.)
- Crane/construction machinery
- Fireworks
- People cheering
- Smoke alarm/security alarm
- Thunder/gunshots
- Ambulance/police siren
- Doorbell/knocking on door
- Vacuum cleaner
- Dishwasher, washing machine/dryer

Vehicles

- Skateboards/longboards
- Bicycles
- Large garbage cans
- Baby strollers
- Shopping carts
- Carts honking
- Buses
- Motorcycles
- Metal surfaces (vet scale, etc.)



PUPPY SOCIALIZATION CHECKLIST



Environments

- Busy street
- Busy sidewalk
- Park with other dogs
- Park with lots of people
- Park with lots of children
- Parking lots
- Shopping areas (pet-friendly)
- Inside business buildings
- Inside other people's homes
- Dog-friendly events
- Street markets and fairs
- Restaurant patios
- Sporting events (as allowed)
- Skate park/biking area
- Lakes and ponds
- Streams and rivers
- Unfamiliar neighborhoods
- Vet office
- Grooming/boarding stores
- Running races/similar events

Objects

- Cooking pots and pans
- Brooms/mops
- Blankets/rugs being shaken
- Balloons
- Umbrellas
- Garbage bag being opened
- Bags blowing in wind
- Soccer/basketball
- Computers
- TV/Video game noises
- Garbage cans with lids
- Metal type surfaces
- Clicker (for training)