

Puppy Socialization Checklist

(0-16 Weeks)



The Puppy Socialization Checklist: Key Areas

Focus on positive exposure in these areas during the 0–16-week window:

Different Types of People:

- Various ages (babies to seniors)
- Different ethnicities
- People wearing diverse items (hats, uniforms, sunglasses)
- People with mobility aids (wheelchairs, canes)
- People with facial hair
- People moving differently

Various Environments:

- Your home & yard
- Friend/family homes (dog-savvy residents)
- Quiet parks (carry puppy before full vaccination)
- Low-traffic sidewalks
- Short, positive car rides
- Pet-friendly stores (carry puppy if needed)
- Happy vet visits (just for treats/hellos)

Different Sounds: (Start low volume, increase if comfortable)

- Household sounds (vacuum, appliances)
- TV, radio, music
- Doorbell, phone
- Outdoor sounds (cars, sirens - from distance)
- Weather sounds (recordings)
- Fireworks sounds (recordings, low volume)

Various Objects:

- Umbrellas (open/close from distance)
- Strollers, bicycles (moving slowly at distance)
- Construction equipment (from safe distance)
- Traffic cones, signs
- Balloons (supervised, distance)
- Different floor textures (carpet, tile, wood)

Other Animals (Safely!):

- Vaccinated, healthy, calm adult dogs (known to you)
- Calm, dog-savvy cats (if available)
- Observe other animals from a distance (birds, squirrels) - NO interaction/chasing.

Gentle Handling & Body Care: (Pair with treats/praise)

- Touch paws, ears, tail
- Look at teeth/gums
- Gentle brushing/grooming
- Putting on collar/harness/leash
- Being held gently
- Introduce grooming tools (clippers, brushes)