



Puppy Socialisation

Puppies 18 weeks and younger

Why Should You Socialise Your Puppy?

All animals have an optimum time period in which to learn about the world around them. For dogs, that age is from birth to about 5 months. If your puppy does not learn certain things during this time, he may never learn them and may always be uncomfortable in certain situations. It is important to socialise your puppy as soon as possible or your puppy may miss some very important developmental deadlines.

Developmental Deadlines

LEARNING ABOUT PEOPLE

Learning about people is one of the most important things for your puppy. Your adult dog will probably spend the majority of his time with people. And, he should be thoroughly socialised with all types of people by the time he is 3 months old. Dogs will only be comfortable around people they are familiar with — this means they need to meet kids of all ages and adults of all sizes, shapes, races, and genders, as well as people in uniforms, people with physical disabilities, men with beards and so on.



BITE INHIBITION

The second most important thing for your puppy to learn — and some would argue it is the first most important thing — is bite inhibition. This doesn't mean that your puppy learns not to bite (although he will learn this), but to control the intensity of his bite. This way, when he's an adult dog, if he is ever put in a position where he feels he must bite, he will not do serious injury. Bite inhibition *absolutely must* be learned by 18 weeks of age.

LEARNING ABOUT DOGS

Although your puppy already has some good info on dogs, he has probably been removed from his litter too early to be really socially adept! Your dog should be exposed to other dogs throughout his life so he can maintain his social skills. Like most things we do, practice makes perfect!

LEARNING ABOUT THE WORLD

Last, but not least, your puppy needs to learn about the world around him. There are all kinds of things your dog should be aware of — trucks, construction, firecrackers, thunderstorms, squirrels, cats, other dogs, smells, sights and sounds. The list goes on and on. The more different and strange things your puppy learns about during his first 5 months, the better able he will be to adjust to unexpected situations as an adult dog.

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CONCLUSION

Don't put off enrolling your puppy in Puppy Socialisation Class — he'll be an adolescent before you know it! If you commit to doing everything you can for your puppy for the first 5 months of his life (which is probably about the first 3 months you have him), you should have a wonderful dog with very few problems.



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