

SOCIALISATION AND HABITUATION

1. Visit other buildings – friends' houses, village hall, dog friendly shops.
2. Locations – Woods, big open spaces, riverside, brook, water, country walk.
3. Surfaces, carpet, sand, gravel, wood floor, tiles, grass, wet /shiny floor...
4. Traffic moving, outside machinery – lawnmowers, motorbikes, cars, lorries, engine sounds stationary and moving.
5. Interact, play and be hand fed by you in the presence of as many people as possible i.e., children, people with buggies, disabled people and buggy, people in street with bags, umbrella's, hats, and trolley's.
6. Public places – Car parks, fêtes/local show, high street, hand fed by people in these places as far as possible.
7. Car journey, gradually increasing distance – enjoyable with treat at end.
8. Vet's – a social 'hello' and game in waiting room, good positive experience.
9. Other puppies and dogs on and off lead.
10. Other people's household pets i.e., cats, rabbits, livestock – sheep, cows and horses.
11. Handled well / stroked / fed by as many people as possible to include elderly, teenagers and gentle introductions to the scent and sound of babies.
12. Other sights and sound – hair-dryer, gunshots, loud music, thunder, shouting and cheering, crowds of people and fast-moving children (school and play areas).
13. Indoor appliances – Blenders, vacuum cleaners, T.V, radio, washer / dryer
14. Other animal noises – cows, sheep, ducks, hens, horses, geese.
15. Engines, tractors, lorries, cars, motorbikes, Sounds of crowds – local cricket / football / school pitch.
16. Moving / dragging furniture and large objects.
17. Other dogs playing. Watch from a distance whilst your puppy watches on in the safety of your arms, lap etc
18. Babies – crying, laughing etc.
19. Outdoor - shed noises, drills, saws, hedge trimmers, strimmer's, pressure washer...
20. Children and adults dressed up i.e. clowns, stilts, face paint etc.
21. People on skates, skate board, wheel chair, disabled buggy, kids in pushchairs, / prams.
22. Steps, stairwells, traffic lights, phone box, street sights.
23. Sounds of sirens, telephones, fireworks, fire. As many different floor surfaces as possible.
24. As many of these experiences you can give your puppy up to 14 weeks of age will be invaluable for his/her future calmness and balanced mind. After 14 weeks, the brain will not accept these things as 'normal' and the puppy will have good reason to appear afraid of novel environmental stimuli.

Make sure that each experience is a positive one. It is important that if your puppy is concerned about anything that he is not encouraged/coaxed or forced into a situation that worries him.

Instead, allow him to take his time and reinforce any positive voluntary interest with praise and a treat and end each experience on a good note whilst the puppy is still **keen** and **inquisitive**.

Fear period/hazard avoidance - Your puppy will go through a 'fear period', this can take place from the age of **11 weeks** and it is perfectly normal for you to see your puppy react with concern/ fear to an object/place or person. This is purely part of his development and may last for several days. Just make light of this and take the emphasis off the feared object by reinforcing confident behaviour or something the puppy already knows and can be rewarded for.

Reward/praise/attention - If you reward your puppy with pleasantness and reward for every behaviour you like to see, these behaviours will likely be repeated. Look out for the things you **DO** want your puppy to do and **PAY** him with attention/treats/voice/touch -gently. Always supply him with something to chew that is his to have.

Biting hands and chewing furniture etc – For the first few weeks from when your puppy arrives home, be sure to have the following available at any time:

- **A tug toy** – the longer the better – a game with you is more interesting than your laces or dressing gown!
- **Treats of different value** placed strategically around the house out of your puppy's reach, this gives you an opportunity to pay for all the behaviours you like at any time.
- **A chew** – long enough to hold whilst your puppy chews it, this is a good calming exercise and might save your skirting boards!

Play, calm play, with toys reserved especially for this 'sharing' time makes for an ideal bonding and connecting opportunity that your puppy will enjoy. Dogs learn many skills through play, with us and play with other puppies of similar ages. By having just three or four toys available at any one time and then exchange/rotate with different ones / reintroduce every few days. Your puppy will be able to differentiate between what things are legal and keep the interest in the toys which are his to interact/play with.

Leads, collar, and harness – introduce very gradually and gently any equipment you will be needing your puppy to wear. Any stress unpleasantness or fear etc experienced during these introductions will likely result in avoidance behaviours – such as pulling on the lead, avoiding being handled, groomed, coming when called and veterinary procedures. A few days to carefully work to create a positive experience will go a long way.

Chewing – please make sure that there are appropriate, 'legal' chew items available at any time. Have a variety so there are different textures available i.e., stag bar, Yak chew, Kong strength toys...

Toilet training.

- Your puppy will need **routine** and **reward** for every toileting opportunity in the appropriate place. **When?** Your puppy's **age in months + 1** is roughly how long your puppy can hold his bladder for i.e., a 9-week puppy would be 3hrs ability to hold his bladder. Ideal opportunities to allow your puppy to toilet can be: -
 - After a meal
 - On waking
 - Before naps / sleep
 - Every couple of hours,
 - At times of any excitement (be outside if possible). Visitors etc
 - After play/games/training

If your puppy looks to be circling/sniffing the ground or wakes from resting, quietly guide him (not carry, unless necessary) outside to toilet, give lavish praise for eliminating where appropriate.

Please ignore any mistakes, as this is a very short phase of physical/mental development and will often be our own misjudgement of timing if mistakes occur. A puppy will learn very quickly and prefer to toilet outside if reinforced with praise/treats and given consideration and guidance for the things we prefer him to do in our human world.