

WELCOMING YOUR NEW pup

Puppies sure are cute, but how can we help them grow up to be well-adjusted and well-mannered? Research says socialization and positive training are key.



Raising a well-rounded puppy is easy - right?
Advice for a happy and healthy furry family member.

Socialization and early training.

Congratulations! You've adopted an adorable furry bundle of joy... now what?! It's time to show her the world! Socialization is one of the most important parts of raising a puppy. Socializing your puppy means teaching her how to be comfortable in a domestic environment - an environment that includes many different types of people, places, animals, sounds, smells and more! Young animals are naturally more willing to accept novel stimuli, or new experiences, because they are in *sensitive periods of development*. This time of your dog's life allows her to become less suspicious of new experiences and develop into a friendly, confident and social adult dog.

This is a time pet owners must take

advantage of. By gradually introducing your puppy to new stimuli and rewarding her for approaching these new people and things, you are socializing her! Make a list of things she should be comfortable with, like cats, children and riding in cars. Slowly introduce her to other dogs, her crate or bicyclists and reward her for her bravery! Make sure you make introductions gradual and one at a time, so you don't overwhelm her.

Mind your manners.

Your puppy is never too young to learn. While puppy enthusiasm can be overlooked, an 80-lb adult dog that is jumping and mouthing you for attention is not so cute! Teach her early on that she gets attention when she is calm, with all four feet on the floor. If she wants to jump, mouth your

Key for growing puppies:

Make sure she is up-to-date on vaccinations and health checks.

Feed her a high-quality, grain-free diet - avoid the bargain brands!

Don't take the good stuff for granted! Always reward her for good behavior.

Never use physical force or punishment.

hands or grab your clothing, playtime is over. Stop playing and leave the room. When you come back, reward her for playing with her favorite toy or greeting you with calm kisses.

Obedience classes are invaluable for both you and your puppy and can help you set these ground rules. Training classes teach you different commands to share with your pet and allow your pup to socialize with other puppies like her! She is learning a lifetime of good behavior, so start as soon as possible!

Sensitive Periods of Development

During a puppy's early life, he goes through a series of sensitive periods of development that help shape him into the adult dog he will one day become. During these sensitive periods of development, certain experiences are optimized and can leave lasting effects on the behavior of your growing pup. The age of 3 weeks is the beginning of the puppy's sensitive period for social and environmental interaction and the commencement of their capacity to develop social relationships. From 4-14 weeks of age, your new pup is experiencing a period of socialization, during which he is more open to and trusting of new experiences. This is prime time for you to be introducing him to new people, places and things!



Curiosity can get the best of your new friend! Kindly teach her that toilet paper is not a toy, but she can shred that stuffed bear you gave her all she wants!



Show early leadership.

It's important for puppy owners to show their new companion that they can be a kind and generous leader.

Dogs can't follow the rules if they don't understand them. Great leaders not only tell puppies they are doing something wrong, but they make sure they always let their puppy know he is doing something right. Remember that when your puppy keeps all four feet on the floor while you are making dinner, he is NOT jumping on the counter and is therefore doing the right thing. Let him know! This is a great time for a tasty treat or some attention.

Puppies will also look to you to help them understand the big world around them. If your puppy gets scared by a loud noise, don't pet her and tell her "it's okay!" This only tells her that being scared is an easy way to get your attention. Instead, act like these new sights or sounds are interesting and safe. Say in a calm, fun voice, "What was that?" When your puppy calms down, perks her ears up or starts to wag that tail, this is the perfect time to pet her and tell her she's a brave girl! It's your job to teach her that the little things are just new experiences and she has nothing to be afraid of.

Keep it positive!

Being a leader doesn't mean using corrective methods for your new pup. Research has shown the most reliable way to teach dogs is through positive reinforcement, in which the dog is rewarded with treats, toys or praise, for performing a desirable behavior. Instead of using

force, positive training teaches dogs that they always have the choice to get a fun reward for being good. Not only do puppies learn faster, but a loving bond develops with their owners. Positive training is fun for both of you!

The most important thing to keep in mind with your new puppy is to keep things positive - for both of you! You are both learning about each other's personalities every day and there will be times when you may make a mistake. This is okay! Instead of sweating the small stuff, learn from these experiences. If your puppy is overwhelmed by the dog park, perhaps you moved too quickly. Instead, take her on neighborhood walks with a mellow canine friend.

Contact us.

Watching your puppy grow and learn is one of the most exciting times in your new life together - enjoy it! If you are concerned about your puppy's behavior, please contact Animal Behavior & Healing by calling (207) 671-0073, or visit us online at AnimalBehaviorHealing.com and speak to our qualified Behavior Department. We are happy to answer questions, provide you with training advice and develop behavior modification plans if necessary. As animal care professionals, we are dedicated to both the physical and behavioral health of your pet and value the bond between you and your new companion!

Ready. Set. Socialize!

Four things to do with your new pup.

1. Introduce her to new people.

It is easy for undersocialized puppies to think new people are scary. It's important for them to learn visitors, strangers and children are safe. New people can give her treats as a "hello!" Remind people not to hover over her or crowd her - instead, let her approach them and reward her for her bravery!

2. Introduce her to furry friends!

Introducing your puppy to new animals is important for her to "play nice" as an adult - reward her for being polite with dogs, cats and other furry friends!

3. Practice regular grooming.

Grooming can be uncomfortable for dogs who have never had the experience. Introduce your puppy to the bathtub and those nail clippers as early as possible! Brush her, clip her nails, brush her teeth and bathe her regularly so she'll become a pro when she grows up.

4. Visit your veterinarian.

Many adult dogs are fearful during veterinary visits. This is because every time they go to the vet office, vaccinations or scary physical exams are likely to follow! Take frequent trips to your veterinarian when your puppy doesn't have an appointment and spend a few minutes in the waiting room. Make these trips about treats and love and your pup will be excited to visit her vet!



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