



# PUPPY SOCIALIZATION CHECKLIST



# PRINTABLE PUPPY SOCIALIZATION CHECKLIST

Socialization should always be short, positive, and tailored to your puppy's comfort level. The goal isn't excitement or forced interaction—it's calm indifference. Introduce new sights, sounds, people, and environments in brief sessions, pairing each experience with praise, treats, or play. If your puppy shows signs of stress or overwhelm, create distance and try again later at a slower pace. Consistent, positive exposure builds confidence and helps your puppy learn that the world is safe and predictable.

## *People & Handling*

- ☐ Men
- ☐ Women
- ☐ Children (calm, supervised)
- ☐ People wearing hats, sunglasses, masks
- ☐ Gentle handling of paws
- ☐ Gentle handling of ears
- ☐ Gentle handling of mouth/teeth
- ☐ Being held in different positions
- ☐ Calm greetings without jumping

## *Sounds*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Vacuum Cleaner                     | <input type="radio"/> Traffic Noises  |
| <input type="radio"/> Doorbell                           | <input type="radio"/> Children Playing  |
| <input type="radio"/> TV / Radio Noise                   | <input type="radio"/> Dogs Barking (controlled exposure)                      |
| <input type="radio"/> Kitchen Sounds (pots / pans / etc) | <input type="radio"/> Thunder or Fireworks (start with low volume recordings) |

## *Environments & Places*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Inside a car (parked, then moving)       | <input type="radio"/> Friend's house                                      |
| <input type="radio"/> Neighborhood walk                        | <input type="radio"/> Vet clinic (happy visit just for treats and weight) |
| <input type="radio"/> Quiet park                               | <input type="radio"/> Grooming environment (brush, table, bath area)      |
| <input type="radio"/> Busy sidewalk (from a distance at first) |   |

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You are doing great, keep up the good work!

## *Surfaces & Objects*

- ☐ Grass
- ☐ Concrete
- ☐ Gravel
- ☐ Wood Floors
- ☐ Tile
- ☐ Carpet
- ☐ Stairs
- ☐ Ramps or Uneven Ground
- ☐ Umbrella Opening
- ☐ Rolling Objects (Stroller / Cart / Etc.)

## *Dogs & Animals (Safe, healthy, vaccinated only)*

- ☐ Calm adult dog
- ☐ Puppy of similar size/age
- ☐ Dogs on leash at a distance
- ☐ Watching dogs play without joining
- ☐ Parallel walking with another dog

## *Food & Resource Confidence*

- ☐ People approaching food bowl
- ☐ Treat added to bowl while eating
- ☐ Puppy to leave bowl briefly in exchange for a treat
- ☐ Trading toys for treats
- ☐ Calm waiting before meals

## *Independence & Confidence*

- ☐ Short periods alone daily
- ☐ Crate time with positive association
- ☐ Settling on a mat or bed
- ☐ Calm time without constant interaction
- ☐ Leaving the room briefly without distress






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Almost there, keep it up!

## *Skills That Support Socialization*

- ☐ Name recognition
- ☐ Sit
- ☐ Recall foundation (come / here)
- ☐ Leash walking exposure
- ☐ Redirection with food or toy
- ☐ Calm focus around distractions

## *Key Reminders*

-  Keep experiences positive and short
-  Reward calm or neutral behavior
-  Let your puppy observe—interaction is optional
-  Never punish fear
-  Socialization is ongoing, not one-and-done

# Happy Training!