

Ages 8-16 Weeks | 100+ Exposures | Printable

# Puppy Socialization Checklist

*The Critical Window - Don't Miss It*

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By **GrabGuides**

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## The Critical Window

3 to 14 weeks is the most important period of your puppy's life. Experiences (or lack of) during this window shape temperament for life. The more positive exposures you pack in now, the more confident your adult dog will be.

**3-14**

Critical Weeks

**100+**

Exposures Goal

**8-16**

Weeks Checklist

### **[SAFE] Before full vaccination**

You CAN socialize before the final shots - safely. Carry your puppy in new environments. Visit homes of known vaccinated dogs. Avoid dog parks and pet store floors until 2 weeks post-final-shot.

## People Checklist (meet 50+)

- Men with beards
- Men with hats/baseball caps
- Men with sunglasses
- Women with long hair
- People in uniforms (delivery, police)
- People in wheelchairs or using canes
- Children under 10 (supervised)
- Teenagers
- Elderly people (slow movement)
- People jogging, skating, biking

## Environments & Surfaces

- Grass, gravel, concrete, sand
- Wood floors, tile, metal grates
- Stairs (up and down)
- Car rides (short, frequent)
- Vet office (just to say hi)
- Outdoor cafes (on lap)
- Busy sidewalks (from carrier)

- Home improvement stores (carried)
- Quiet parks during off-hours
- Different rooms in different homes

## Sounds (at low volume first)

- Vacuum cleaner
- Washing machine / dryer
- Doorbell / knocking
- Fireworks (recorded, low volume)
- Thunderstorms (recorded)
- Traffic / sirens
- Baby crying (recorded)
- Dogs barking (recorded)
- Kitchen sounds (blender, dishes)
- TV at normal volume

## Handling & Grooming

- Paws touched + held
- Ears examined + wiped
- Teeth touched + brushed
- Nails clipped (just the tips)
- Brushed + combed
- Bathed (warm water, gentle)
- Harness put on + taken off
- Leash walked indoors
- Carried + picked up by different people
- Held on back (for vet exams)

### **[RULE] The 3-Second Rule**

When meeting other dogs: let them sniff for 3 seconds, then call your puppy away. This prevents bad interactions. If both dogs are relaxed, allow another 3 seconds. Build slowly.

## Signs of GOOD Socialization

- Loose, relaxed body language
- Willingly approaches new things
- Recovers quickly from small startles
- Eats treats in new environments
- Tail in neutral or wagging position

## Signs of TOO MUCH (back off)

- Tail tucked under body
- Ears pinned back flat
- Whale eye (showing whites)
- Trembling or shaking
- Refusing treats they normally love
- Trying to hide or flee

## Ready for the complete system?

*This free guide is a starting point.*

*The paid guide gives you the complete step-by-step system.*

### **Puppy Training Guide - \$17**

[grabguides.com/products/puppy-training](https://grabguides.com/products/puppy-training)

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