



Puppy Socialization Checklist

Build confidence through positive, controlled exposure — not forced greetings. Check an item when your puppy can experience it comfortably.

PEOPLE

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Babies & toddlers (at a distance) | ☐ Walkers, canes & wheelchairs |
| ☐ Children of different ages | ☐ Umbrellas & unusual objects |
| ☐ Adults & older adults | ☐ Cyclists, scooters & skateboards |
| ☐ People with facial hair | ☐ Delivery drivers & visitors |
| ☐ Hats, sunglasses & face coverings | ☐ Small groups & busy crowds |
| ☐ Uniforms & work clothing | ☐ People moving or exercising |

ANIMALS

Aim for neutrality. Not every animal needs to be approached or greeted.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Calm, known vaccinated dogs | ☐ Birds |
| ☐ Dogs of different sizes | ☐ Squirrels & wildlife |
| ☐ Dogs with different appearances | ☐ Small pets (at a distance) |
| ☐ Dogs playing at a distance | ☐ Livestock (from a safe distance) |
| ☐ Cats | ☐ Watching dogs without greeting |

ENVIRONMENTS & OUTINGS

Choose safe outings for vaccination status. Introduce car washes gradually; never force exposure.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Veterinary clinic (happy visit) | ☐ Outdoor shopping centers |
| ☐ Groomer / grooming salon | ☐ Drive-throughs |
| ☐ Short, calm car rides | ☐ Automatic doors & elevators |
| ☐ Longer car rides | ☐ Shopping carts & rolling items |
| ☐ Different traffic conditions | ☐ Water features & shorelines |
| ☐ Calm car entry & exit | ☐ Different weather conditions |
| ☐ Waiting in parked car (adult present) | ☐ Crates, gates & new rooms |
| ☐ Parks & walking trails | ☐ Watching a car wash from afar |
| ☐ Dog-friendly shops | ☐ Drive-through car wash (if calm) |



Explore, Observe & Learn

Short, positive sessions count! Allow your puppy to watch from a distance, offer rewards, and stop if they become overwhelmed.

SOUNDS

Start unfamiliar sounds quietly. Increase intensity only when your puppy is relaxed.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Doorbell & knocking | ☐ Motorcycles & trucks |
| ☐ Vacuum cleaner | ☐ Construction & lawnmowers |
| ☐ Hair blow dryer | ☐ Thunder (low-volume recording) |
| ☐ Pet grooming dryer | ☐ Fireworks (low-volume recording) |
| ☐ Dishwasher & laundry machines | ☐ Babies crying (recording) |
| ☐ Blender & kitchen noises | ☐ Unusual voices & laughter |
| ☐ TV, music & cheering | ☐ Car wash sounds & vibrations |

SURFACES & MOVEMENT

Let your puppy explore at their own pace. Never force or pull them onto a surface.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Grass & dirt | ☐ Bridges & ramps |
| ☐ Gravel & sand | ☐ Steps & stairs |
| ☐ Concrete & pavement | ☐ Wet surfaces (non-slip) |
| ☐ Carpet & rugs | ☐ Unstable surfaces (supported) |
| ☐ Wood, tile & linoleum | ☐ Different floor textures |
| ☐ Metal grates (safe surfaces) | ☐ Moving doors & elevators |

GROOMING & HANDLING

Use brief, cooperative sessions with breaks and rewards.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Gentle ear handling | ☐ Nail clippers / grinder sound |
| ☐ Look at teeth & mouth | ☐ Bath & towel drying |
| ☐ Touch paws & toes | ☐ Standing for an exam |
| ☐ Tail & body handling | ☐ Wearing collar or harness |
| ☐ Brushing coat | ☐ Calm restraint practice |
| ☐ Toothbrushing practice | ☐ Positive muzzle conditioning |

TRAVEL EXPERIENCES (OPTIONAL)

For dogs who travel. No need to book a trip just to check these off!

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Pet-friendly hotels or rentals | ☐ Settling in an unfamiliar room |
| ☐ Hotel lobbies & hallways | ☐ Sounds through doors & walls |
| ☐ Elevators & stairwells | |