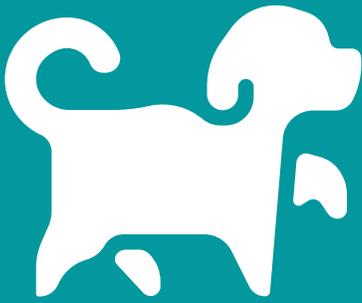


## **Disclaimer:**

This socialization planner is not a guarantee of any particular outcomes of socialization or training. It is not tailored to any individual puppy's temperament or personality. It is designed to give people ideas and examples of socialization experiences that are based on best practices and current scientific evidence about socialization in puppies, and is not intended to replace or substitute for the recommendations of your veterinarian. You should consult with your veterinarian before beginning any socialization or training program.

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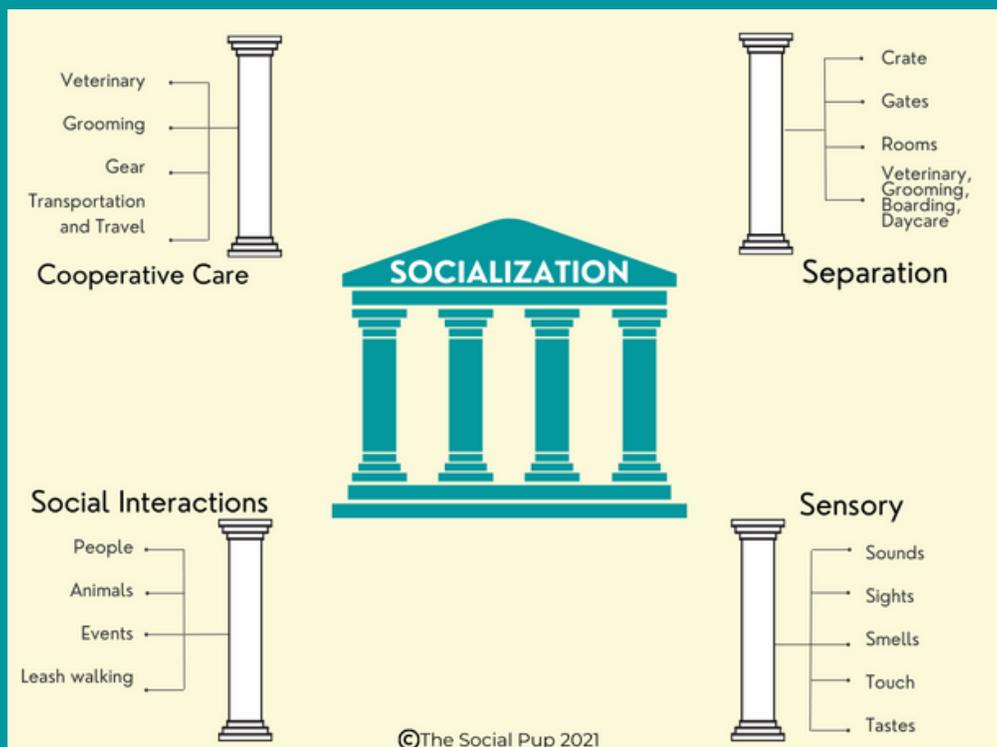


# The Four Pillars of Socialization



The term "socialization" can be a bit misleading, as it sounds like it's all about social interactions. In fact, socialization is much more than just social interactions. The American Veterinary Medical Association defines socialization as "...the process of preparing a dog or cat to enjoy interactions and be comfortable with other animals, people, places and activities."

In attempting to list all of the various socialization experiences we think dogs need to have, we decided there are four main categories the experiences fall into. We call these The Four Pillars of Socialization. In your socialization journey, try to make sure your puppy gets at least some experiences from all four pillars.





# Pillar I: Social Interactions

This is what we tend to think of when we hear the term "socialization". Meetings and greetings with people and animals, as well as larger gatherings of people for public events or family get togethers.

People tend to introduce their dog to family and close friends, but don't always think to introduce them to people outside that group, and especially people who are different from oneself in terms of ethnicity, culture, or even age. Also, it's not always easy finding someone outside your own familiar group who is willing and able to help socialize your puppy. This is where attending a puppy socialization class is helpful. Also, exploring different public parks or local retail areas than you normally frequent, might expose you to a greater diversity of people. If you don't have any babies or toddlers in your social circle, make a plan to spend some time near a public playground, so your puppy can experience the sights and sounds of children. With a responsible parent supervising them, children can greet your puppy and allow your puppy to experience the smell and touch of a child.

It's also important to think about the location where your puppy encounters unfamiliar people or dogs. Meetings should take place both inside your home and yard, and in public. But as your puppy grows up, you should continue to invite people to your home who are unfamiliar to your dog, such as neighbors or friends or family you haven't seen in a while. You can even include delivery drivers or a repairman in socialization, by putting your puppy on leash and asking the person to give your puppy some treats. This will give your puppy a positive association with unfamiliar people coming in your home. Don't worry, this doesn't mean your puppy will grow up to have a positive association with burglars. Someone who forceably enters your home with ill intent behaves very differently from a friendly person, and your dog will know the difference.



## Pillar II: Cooperative Care

Cooperative Care is conditioning your dog to be relaxed and tolerant of handling procedures such as nail trims, brushing, baths, and the types of handling that occur at veterinary visits. It also involves conditioning dogs to be comfortable and accepting of different kinds of gear, such as harnesses, head halters, Elizabethan collars, clothing, costumes, and muzzles, as well as conditioning them to be calm and quiet during travel and in various modes of transport.

All cooperative care conditioning consists of breaking down procedures into small steps, and pairing each step with yummy treats and calm praise. For handling of body parts, for example, start with body parts that are less sensitive, such as the back or chest. As your dog gets acclimated to feeling your touch on these areas, gradually progress over days and weeks to more sensitive areas, such as the tail, the ears, the mouth, and the paws. Your dog should be relaxed, readily eating food, and accepting of each step for several sessions before you progress to the next one, and if at any point your dog stops eating the treats, stop immediately and go back to the level where they will eat. Cooperative care conditioning takes time and patience, so go slow and keep it positive!



# Pillar III: Separation

Most people don't think of separation as being a part of socialization, but it's actually vitally important! There are lots of times throughout your dog's life when they will have to be separated from you and other family members, and they will need to be calm, content, and able to be by themselves for both short and extended periods of time on any given day.

Most people these days understand that crate training puppies is important, but there are many other aspects to positive separation beyond crate training. Your dog should feel comfortable and have a positive association with being in a crate for limited amounts of time during the day, with being in a room with the door closed, being behind a baby gate, being led away on leash by an unfamiliar person, being tethered on leash under supervision, and being held in a veterinary kennel or cage for brief periods of time. Like all other conditioning, the best way to accomplish this is to start with small amounts of time and pair with yummy treats.



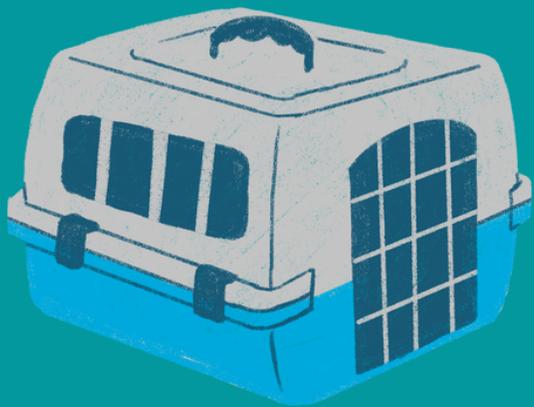
# Pillar IV: Sensory

Socialization experiences that focus on the five senses make up the Sensory Pillar. Although one or more of the five senses are of course involved in all socialization experiences, we think it's helpful to have a separate category to bring people's attention to the sensory aspect of experiences. Dogs should be comfortable with hearing sounds both far away and fairly close, such as loud trucks or machinery, dogs barking, fireworks, thunder, sirens, children playing close by, babies crying, crowds of people, musical instruments or bands playing, etc. Always start exposures at a great distance or low volume, and gradually get closer or louder. They should also be comfortable with seeing different sights, such as large trucks or machinery, rolling objects, people running or riding bikes, umbrellas opening, flags or other objects moving in the wind, parades or festivals. Generally, the larger the object or the more people there are, the slower you should go with the process. They should explore varied physical surfaces, such as walking trails, stairs, downtown areas, slick floors, grass (including when it's wet, icy or snowy out), wooden decks, and gravel. Finally, they should be introduced to a variety of smells and tastes, such as the smell of ear cleaner and rubbing alcohol, and the taste of dog toothpaste, and dog-safe fruits and vegetables, such as bananas, canned pumpkin, or carrots.

Remember, too, that people wear different kinds of clothing, and use different equipment to assist them, so dogs should be exposed to things such as hats, sunglasses, hoodies, backpacks, walkers, canes, wheel chairs, etc., so they will understand that all of this is normal and not to be feared.

**REMEMBER!**

Until two weeks after the final puppy booster is given, puppies should always be in a stroller or carrier when in public places where dogs frequent, such as pet supply stores, in or near dog parks, other public parks, common areas of apartment complexes, rest stops, animal shelters or veterinary clinics.





# Socialization Daily Checklist

WEEK 1



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- Day 1**
-  Social: meet new person/people at home (one at a time)
  -  Cooperative care: begin body handling
  -  Sensory: sound of vacuum or hair dryer in another room
  -  Separation: stuffed Kong in the crate for 5 minutes with you in the room.

- Day 2**
-  Social: meet new person/people at home (one at a time)
  -  Cooperative care: continue handling plus short car ride (5 - 10 minutes, in crate)
  -  Sensory: introduction to stairs
  -  Separation: stuffed Kong in crate for 1 minute with you out of sight.

- Day 3**
-  Social: meet new dog-friendly dog at home
  -  Cooperative care: first bath
  -  Sensory: introduction to sight of a rolling object (trash can, chair, tricycle or bicycle)
  -  Separation: stuffed Kong behind baby gate or in play pen for 5 minutes with you in the room.



# Socialization Daily Checklist

WEEK 1



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Day 4



Social: meet an elderly person



Cooperative care: continue handling plus start leash and harness conditioning



Sensory: introduction to sound of big trucks (garbage trucks or trucks/machines at a construction site)



Separation: stuffed Kong behind baby gate for 1 minute with you out of sight.

Day 5



Social: meet a calm child (make sure a parent can help assist with the introduction)



Cooperative care: continue handling plus a happy vet visit: conditioning to **outside** of clinic



Sensory: introduction to smell of ear wipes or cleaner



Separation: 1 minute in crate giving treats through door

Day 6



Social: stroll with another dog-friendly dog nearby



Cooperative care: continue handling and start mock nail trims



Sensory: offer a new dog safe food (banana, carrot, sweet potato or canned pumpkin)



Separation: 1 minute behind gate, tossing treats over



# Socialization Daily Checklist

WEEK 1



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Day 7



Social: meet new person with hat and sunglasses



Cooperative care: continue mock nail trims plus a medium length car ride (30 minutes, in crate)



Sensory: sight and sound of vacuum or hair dryer in same room



Separation: stuffed Kong for 5 minutes in crate or behind gate with you out of sight.

Great  
Job



Congrats on completing Week 1 of your puppy's socialization journey! Are you tired yet?! 😊 The fun doesn't stop now, so be sure to get access to more exclusive content by subscribing, following us on social media, or joining a Social Pup class!