



# Before You Bring a Puppy Home

*Training with a purpose, because they are worth it.*





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## *The Decision Phase: The Right Match*

The decision to get a new puppy or dog should be taken seriously. It takes time, effort and money to raise a puppy properly and end up with a nice dog you can take anywhere. As a professional dog trainer/instructor, the biggest mistake I see people making is getting a dog that isn't best suited (or the right match) for their family, lifestyle or commitment level. For this reason, many dogs are rehomed, put into rescue organizations, or shelters. I encourage you to do your homework and prepare for your new arrival.

*To be a responsible dog owner, here are some questions to ask yourself and/or your family:*

### **Do you have the time?**

- Puppies require that you feed them on a regular basis (3 x a day; breakfast, lunch and dinner).
- They will need to be trained to sleep in a crate at night and at times during the day. It is not hard crate train a pup but it does take dedicated time. Your puppy will need to be taken outside on the leash on a regular schedule to relieve themselves and to aid in the housebreaking process. For the first few weeks you will be waking up several times during the night to take your puppy out to relieve themselves.
- Adult dogs will need regular exercise by means of walks and adventures. Many dogs that do not get regular exercise become bored and will chew up your house and/or yard. Puppies and dogs need proper grooming/brushing.
- To survive puppyhood you should enroll them in puppy preschool classes. Starting at 10 weeks old, these classes should contain short, 5 minute training sessions, twice a day.



## **Do you have ambition?**

- Because both puppies and dogs take time and attention, you have to be a little ambitious when entering into this journey. It will require that you do things everyday on a consistent basis. You may find that you need to sacrifice other things in your life for awhile until your new puppy or dog settles in.
- If you want to come home after work and veg out, DO NOT bring a canine into your family.
- How ambitious you are should determine a great deal to the age and breed of dog you should get. Puppies are a lot of work and some people don't want to go through the puppy raising stage, therefore an older dog might be a better choice.

Some dog breeds have a higher energy level than others and some are more ambitious, so it's best to do your homework on the breed of dog that would best fit your lifestyle and personality.

Taking responsibility for learning how to handle your new puppy and adolescent dog behaviors also takes some ambition. Your new puppy will want to chew on things, nip & bite, play, dig and more. These are all natural behaviors you should expect. If you know they are coming you can be proactive by setting up crate and kennel time, proper supervision and training.

## **Do you have the financial ability?**

Here are some examples of immediate financial obligations of pet ownership:

- Up-front vet bills (\$200).
- Supplies (see my "supply list").
- Good quality dog food ( \$50-80 per month or more depending on size of dog).
- A fence for your yard AND outdoor kennel (\$500-\$1,000 or more).
- Training (\$200-\$1,000 or more).



## Do you know the dog's breed (or can make a best guess)?

- The breed of dog should be taken into consideration.  
If you want a dog for protection for example, you might choose a German Shepherd. If you want a lap dog and companionship you might choose a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel.
- The American Kennel Club (AKC) has a fantastic website ([akc.org](http://akc.org)). Here you can type in the specific breed of dog you are considering and it will give you a description of that dog breed. It will give you an idea of what to expect. Also, there is a plethora of other very useful information for the any dog owner so, I encourage people to check this website out.

The American Kennel Club Groups are as follows:

- Hound **Group**
- Terrier **Group**
- Working **Group**
- Herding **Group**
- Sporting **Group**
- Non-Sporting **Group**
- Toy **Group**



[www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)



## *Canine Personality*

It is very important to understand that different dogs will have different personalities. A dog's personality or character is highly dependent on the genetics of the animal. It is well known in the dog world that both good and bad qualities are passed onto the offspring of a mated pair. I highly recommend that if you have the chance to have a visual of the parents, that you do so. Pay particular attention to the mother dog and how she acts toward you and behaves in general. To a large degree, the mother dog's personality determines the personality traits of the pups. If the mother is an aggressive dog with a poor attitude, the puppies will probably have the same poor attitude.

## *Disposition and Temperament*

**Disposition:** To describe a dog's disposition is making some observations as to how the puppy or adult dog feels about humans and other dogs. Is the dog naturally friendly and outgoing toward humans and other dogs? Or not? A dog is described as either having a "good" disposition or "poor" disposition. It's kind of a pass or fail evaluation. A dog's disposition is strongly genetic however, experiences and environment at a young age will have a strong impact, as well.

**Temperament:** Describing a dog's temperament is to outline the character of the dog and it encompasses a lot of things. It has much to do with the genetics of the dog and it's innate (or inborn) emotional and mental status. In other words, it's the dog's attitude toward the world around it and its personality all rolled up in one. The best dogs to live or work with are ones that have a "stable" temperament. They are not nervous, worried, or aggressive. They can go anywhere and be happy and confident doing so.



We only have about 6 months to mold a dog's temperament. If a puppy has a bad experience (or lack of positive, confidence building experiences) before it is 6 months old it may never be able to be fixed. A good example is a dog that is gun shy. When a dog is afraid of the sound of a gunshot, it will never have the temperament to hunt well. However, we do have some control over temperament, although not completely. You cannot change a dog's disposition or temperament after 6 months. In the case of a strong genetic propensity to have a poor disposition AND temperament, you may not be able to change it at all. If puppies are given the right start in life and owners focus on socializing and introducing the puppy to the world around it in a positive and confidence building way, it will have a greater chance at having a stable temperament as an adult.

The breed of the dog must be considered when talking about temperament. In order for the dog to excel at what it was bred for the dog should possess certain "traits" and have a certain kind of temperament.



A dog bred to hunt needs to, naturally, have the right temperament for the job. It has to WANT to hunt. Whatever the dog is bred to do, it has to be "in him" from the start to be considered the right temperament for the job. A police dog has to be courageous. It can't be worried or fearful or it will not excel at his job. Breeders evaluate temperament at 7 weeks old. A trained eye can tell right off if that dog has the "right stuff" to be considered fully capable to do what it was bred to do (herding dog, companion dog, protection dog, etc...).



It is interesting to consider that a dog may have the right temperament to do the job it was born to do, but also have a poor disposition. An example might be a coon hound that has all the right stuff to hunt and tree a racoon but hates people. This kind of dog would be a good hound but would not be a good family pet. Most of you reading this want a dog to be a family dog. This is why knowing the background of your dog is important. If you don't know the dog's lineage, you should learn how to temperament test an animal before you bring it home to make sure it will be a good fit for your situation.

**“You can make a good dog excellent. But, you can't make a poor dog fair.” -William Koehler**





## *The Responsibility of the Breeder*

Because genetics play a role in a dog's temperament, the breeder has a big responsibility to breed in order to have dogs with stable temperaments. As mentioned before, a dog with a poor temperament that is bred will pass on its poor temperament to the pups. But, early puppyhood experiences also play an extremely important role in molding a dog's temperament. The breeder or person raising the puppies, also has the responsibility to properly handle and socialize the puppies before they go to their new homes. If you are buying a puppy from a breeder you should ask, "what do you do to get the puppies ready for their new homes"? Or, "what kind of handling and socializing do the puppies get"?

### **Here are some things a prospective breeder are responsible for:**

- The puppies are handled and touched daily.
- At around 3 weeks old people should come to visit the puppies so the puppies can see some new people and have a positive socializing experience. (This event should include children and the "play time" is well supervised to make sure they don't get stepped on or dropped).
- The pups should have a chance to follow the breeder and family around their place. They should have them come into the house and have been out in the yard to experience the sounds and activities of family life in safe and positive way. .
- The pups could be introduced to going in and out of a crate.
- The pups could have been introduced to going on gentle, short car rides and walking on a leash.
- The pups have gotten used to normal household noises and activities.
- Pups should look clean, well fed and cared for. Their eyes should be bright and coats should look good.
- Pups should be eager and happy to see visitors and appear social in nature.
- No puppy should be hiding or looking shy (this may be an anti-social dog as an adult).
- The puppies have had good experiences with other dogs including the mother and/or father dogs (no traumatic experiences like an attack or bullying behavior)



### My dog Foxy Roxy with her 10 puppies!

You should definitely go and visit the puppies. You can do this as soon as they are 3 weeks old. If there is something you do not like about the breeder's property, habits or anything you don't like about the puppies, I highly recommend that you think seriously about whether or not to buy a puppy from them. If the puppies are shy or timid, I highly recommend that you walk away and start over. Shy and/or timid puppies will grow into insecure, fearful and potentially aggressive dogs. Some people might feel sorry for a puppy like this and take it home to get it out of the current environment. If you do that, you are taking on the responsibility of a puppy with a potentially poor disposition. It will be VERY important to get into a puppy preschool class to begin socialization. Pups like this will be a bit more work than puppies with solid, outgoing temperaments.

### Other things to get from your breeder

- **Your Pup's Origins:** A pedigree and birth certificate, temperament test results.
- **Contract:** A contract of their terms of sale and your part in that. Make sure you understand what the breeder expects of you.
- **Health Tests:** Any OFA results (Orthopedic Foundation of America). Different breeds require different health tests. You can go on the American Kennel Club (AKC) website and look up the required tests by breed.  
<https://www.akc.org/breeder-programs/akc-bred-with-heart-program/requirements/health-testing-requirements/>
- **Photos:** Photos of the parents and the litter.
- **Vaccinations & Worming Info:** Record of the vaccinations they gave and when, as well as when the puppies were wormed.
- **Puppy Raising info:** They may have a nice puppy packet for you with tips on how to give your puppy a good start in life.
- **Food:** They may give you some of the food the puppy is on or at least let you know ahead of time so you can go buy it. You don't want to switch a puppy to a new food too quickly or it will end up with an upset tummy.



## *The Preparation Phase*

### *The ride home...A good first experience*

You don't want to make the mistake of having the first car ride home a bad experience for your puppy. If you want your dog to love riding in the car, make his first trip home a positive experience by taking the car ride home seriously and thinking ahead. Have someone in the car that can hold the puppy in their lap on the way home while someone else drives. Have some pieces of kibble available to feed the puppy in order to give him something positive to think about. The car ride should be calm and relaxed. A loud, chaotic car ride home can put undue stress on your puppy. DO NOT take your puppy to the pet store on the way home. This is a big mistake and can be a stressful experience, as he has just been taken from his litter. And, your unvaccinated puppy could come in contact with a deadly virus! Lastly, drive calmly, like you have a bomb in the car.

### *Your Home Environment*

Over the years, I have heard every story there is about customer's problems with their dogs. In many cases (not all), even the most serious of problems might have been prevented with some prior planning. The home environment you've set up for your puppy can make or break your ability to mold it into a stable, confident and trustworthy companion as an adult.



## *A Family Meeting*

As you get ready to bring your new puppy home it is a good idea to have a family meeting and decide on what needs to happen or not happen on that exciting day. You might want to have some people over to meet the new puppy but, make sure it is not an overwhelming amount of people.

Talk about creating a nice, calm energy around the house on that day. Now, get ready...

1. **Have your puppy's "place" all set up.** A pen or room where the crate is going to be should already be designated.
2. **Let her relieve herself in the yard before going in the house.** As soon as you arrive home take your puppy right out into the yard where you want her to relieve herself. Sometimes people are so excited they miss this step and take the puppy right inside and guess what? The puppy has been holding her urine on the car ride and oops, she goes to the bathroom in the house. This is a fail that could have been easily prevented.
3. **Create a calm welcome for the new puppy.** Discourage children from screaming with glee at the new puppy and have an adult hold the puppy while the children calmly pet it. DO NOT let the children pick up the puppy. There is too high of a risk of dropping the puppy or scaring it. A bad experience can scar a dog for life. Dogs that mistrust kids can sometimes be linked back to the first day they met them.
4. **Introduce him to his crate.** You will have more of a chance at raising a calm puppy if his home environment is calm and you have a place for him to settle down. After you have brought the puppy into the house and have enjoyed him for a bit, take him to his pen and or area where the crate is. Let him go in and out by throwing a piece of food in it. When the puppy shows that they are getting tired, put them in the crate right away and take advantage of it by creating a sense that the



crate is his safe place. If there is going to be a lot of commotion going on in the house, put the puppy away in his kennel/ crate.

5. **Have calm interactions.** When you are excited and rambunctious, your puppy will mirror this behavior and you will have the exact opposite of a calm puppy. This will lead to the puppy wanting to excitedly jump-up and can quickly escalate to the biting game. It is ok to put the puppy away in his crate until he settles down. This is a good way to control his desire for attention and to teach him how to settle down. By doing this when he is young, you will reap the rewards as the pup matures. A puppy that never learns how to settle down will be excitable his entire life and this can be quite an inconvenience.
6. **Have chew toys and throw toys ready.** To discourage puppies from biting you can simply quit petting them when they are biting and give them a chew toy instead. Throwing a toy works to distract them off humans and onto the object instead.
7. **Feeding station.** Have a feeding station set up and keep other dogs and animals away as to allow the puppy to eat without feeling threatened. Puppies require the same nutrition as an adult dog. Feeding 3 times a day is required at first.
8. **Create dependency.** Dogs want 4 things out of life: freedom, food, exercise & attention. Make your pup dependent on you for these things and you will have a stronger bond and well-mannered dog.
9. **Start teaching.** Get your pup to follow you and take direction from you by teaching basic obedience commands: sit, come, down, heel and stay, using treats as a reward. Teach the pup to walk into its crate by throwing a piece of kibble in there (command is “in the crate”).
10. **Create some rules.** This is where people make the most mistakes. When puppies are given too much freedom and no restrictions right off the bat, it often causes dogs to behave like little monsters. A simple set of rules could be: puppies shouldn't jump up on us, bite us or get up on the bed or other furniture.



## *Puppy Proofing Guidelines (inside your home)*

- Keep toxic and harmful objects out of puppy's reach. Medicines, cigarettes, nail polish, cleaning fluids, antifreeze, bug repellents, garbage and trash, soaps and detergents, shrubs and houseplants are all dangerous, and some are poisonous.
- Make sure the puppy cannot chew on electric wiring of any kind. Close access to areas you do not want the puppy in. Open stairways and closet doors invite puppies to investigate, which can lead to injury or trouble.
- Shoes, socks and clothes left lying on the floor present open invitations to chew.
- Items placed on low coffee tables can easily be reached and destroyed by curious puppies.
- Puppies love to chew newspapers, magazines and books. Keep them up high until the puppy grows older.
- You wouldn't leave a toddler alone in a room by themselves. Use this same logic with a puppy.
- Never leave a puppy unsupervised, even for a few minutes! Major accidents can happen when you turn your back "just for a minute." Trust me on this!
- Never give a puppy the freedom to wander alone through a house or it may mistake all of your rooms for bathrooms.
- Use your crate as a "babysitter" when you can't supervise the puppy.

Puppy Proofing the house is the best way to prevent a puppy from chewing up furniture, slippers clothing or other items so remove them from the area.

**THINK AHEAD!**



## *Puppy Proofing Guidelines (your yard)*

If you want to keep your lawn & landscaping and have a dog that doesn't dig holes or chew the siding off your house, do not leave your puppy unattended to roam the yard and get into trouble.

- Your puppy/dog should have a fenced in backyard w/a kennel enclosure where you can secure your dog when needed.
- Your puppy should sleep in a crate next to your bed for the first 6 months to help in the bonding process.
- Your puppy/dog should not have the entire run of the house and yard all day long. Use a crate (for puppy) or kennel (for adult dog) to secure your dog and keep him safe from getting into trouble until you can trust him more (around 2 ½ years of age).
- Give your puppy boundaries, daily routines and rules because this will create respect & dependency which are both needed to have a happy & healthy relationship with your dog.
- Do not allow jumping-up, rough play, biting or growling (remember wrestling and rough housing will teach the puppy to bite). Your puppy should not be allowed to run and chase children. Put the puppy away or on the leash. Teach children to respect the puppy and to never engage the puppy in play. This can come later when the dog is older and has learned respect for the children.



- Do not give your puppy/dog real meat bones. Even a young puppy can become possessive over a bone and learn to back you off by growling or snarling at you. Don't start this very dangerous pattern.
- Your puppy/dog should have a few select toys, not an entire room full of them. I recommend a Kong, a nylabone, & rope toy. No soft, plush toys. They feel a lot like the carpet, dog beds or car upholstery and teaches your pup to chew on soft things. Teach your puppy to “share” these items with you and your children in a positive way where the pup learns that your hand coming toward his toys is not a threat. You will learn how to do this properly at Puppy Pre-School.





# SUPPLIES

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	LIST ITEM	ADDITIONAL NOTES
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 crates (one for your bedroom ; one for living room)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6'x5/8" leash (or smaller for petite pups) and flat nylon collar	
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 cow hooves	Do no give after 6 months
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 nylabone dura chew (not edible)Kong Toy	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rope Toy	Do not leave rope toy with the pup when you are not watching. You don't want them to ingest pieces of it.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same food as breeder until 10 weeks old then, <a href="#">Life's Abundance Dog Food</a>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stainless steel water and food bowls	Plastic holds bacteria stainless doesn't.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Baby gates as needed to keep pup out of certain rooms of the house	
<input type="checkbox"/>	No bed, no plush toys. Letting puppies chew on these will start bad habits.	



## *The Socialization Phase: 4 weeks to 6 months*

From the age of 4 weeks to 6 months, your puppy is at a critical stage in his life, and how you treat him now will determine what dog you'll have as he gets older. So, socializing him now is your only opportunity to mold your dog's personality (or what we call his temperament). Many people underestimate the importance of socializing a puppy. But, take my word for it, socializing your puppy is the single, most important thing you can do. If you don't socialize your pup properly, you may end up with a dog that lacks confidence, is fearful and likely to be aggressive later in life.

### *Socialization with Other Pups (4-6 weeks)*

Hopefully, you did not bring your puppy home any earlier than 7 weeks old. This is a very important time for a puppy. A puppy removed from its litter and mother at this time will have missed a very important stage of development. They are just starting to play with each other. This play is critical to the pups learning the language of dogs. A pup who is taken away too soon will often have a propensity to be dog aggressive as an adult because they missed this most critical interaction with their mother and littermates. Puppies who don't have the right socialization during this phase, or who experience a bad experience (like the mother or another adult dog biting/attacking them), will have psychological scars for the rest of their life.

### *Socialization with People (5-16 weeks)*

Now the socialization begins to shift from the mother and littermates toward humans. This is why the perfect time to take a puppy home is around 7-8 weeks; they are ready to bond to humans and why not to their new owners? During this time they require all the attention they can get. Now that you have your puppy home, it is your job to properly socialize and raise your puppy into the dog of your dreams.



## *Fear/Avoidance Phase (8-10 weeks)*

This is an important time for new puppy owners to be very aware. During this time, puppies may become more tentative and cautious. This is a natural adjustment to full adult sensory capacities. Responsible breeders and educated owners take this time very seriously and know how to usher pups through. It is important for new owners to take this responsibility seriously, as well. Puppies who don't have the right socialization during this phase, or who have a bad experience, like being scared by a loud noise, or person/child who scares them, can have psychological scars for the rest of their life.

## *No Bad Experiences*

At this young age, your pup is learning rapidly and what he learns will have a lasting impact on him. Although his attention span is short, he will quickly make associations to things that he experiences. These associations will make a strong impression on him and will be resistant to change. For this reason you need to be very careful about what your puppy is learning – and believe me, he's learning even when you think you're not teaching.

If you want to raise a stable, confident dog, your most important task during this time will be to see that your puppy does not have a bad experience with people, children, other dogs or his environment. Bad experiences can be such things as loud, unexpected noises – like something falling down next to him, or people suddenly screaming at him – a wild ride in a car, an overly aggressive dog, or being struck or knocked around, basically anything that would cause him to shy away or be afraid.



You may have known a dog that was afraid of the vacuum, hose, or worse, children. This is often the result of a bad experience. Any frightening or painful experience at this time will have a more lasting impact now than it would if it occurred at a later time.

*A significant amount of scientific and experiential research has been done on the topic of puppy development. Some of the best writings can be found in The Art of Raising a Puppy by the Monks of New Skete.*

*“Negligence by a breeder or new owner during this time can scar a puppy for life” - The Monks of New Skete, The Art of Raising a Puppy (pg.19)*



**Did you know?** If you bring a new puppy home to another dog you should know that it has a 50% of becoming dog aggressive as he gets older IF you allow the older dog to play too rough or correct that new puppy. Monitor their interaction and teach the puppy to respect the older dog. Play can come later. Respect should come first. Puppies that don't learn this can end up with behavior problems and/or just learn to play too rough which can get them into trouble with other dogs who won't tolerate it.



## *Crate and Kennel Training Theory*

As den animals, domestic dogs have an instinct to hide in an enclosed area. This is why you will see them go under a table or bed. This sort of enclosure gives them security. This stems from all dog's basic need to escape from danger. If you watch a litter of puppies mature you will see that at around 4 weeks of age puppies they will begin to venture further away from the den to explore and to relieve themselves but, they will return to the den to spend time with the mother, for security and to sleep.

- **The first night.** Crate train your puppy from the day you bring her home. She should sleep in her crate that first night right next to your bed so you can hear her whimpering and take her outside to go to the bathroom. Because they are pack animals, we can use this desire to be with the pack to aid in the bonding process. It also gives them a sense of structure and predictability in their day. Going into the crate becomes a habit and they simply begin to anticipate crate time. DO NOT give in a let them up in your bed. That sends a different message.
- **That first day.** Before you expect your new pup to sleep in the crate that night, take some time that first day to introduce her to the crate in a positive way. Make it a good first experience. **Leave the door open and feed the pup her first meal in there.** Stay there (sitting on the floor) while he eats. Once she is done she can come out on her own. She will probably come right to you, pet her and tell her "good boy". At other times throughout that first day throw a few pieces of kibble into the crate and let her run in to get them. When she comes out praise her verbally and pet your puppy for daring to go in on her own. Do this until it feels like a game. If you are fancy, you can start giving the



command “in the crate” just as she runs in to get the piece of food. Carefully shut the door sometimes and see how she does with that. Get to the point where you can walk away with the door closed while she is distracted with food or a something to chew on. Come back within 1-2 minutes and let him out. Repeat until it is no big deal.

- **Teach pup to go in on her own.** DO NOT pick your puppy up and put her into the crate. Why? Because they don’t like this, would you? They are capable to go in on their own if you exercise some patience and aid them in the process.
- **Your turn as pack leader.** While with their mother and littermates your puppy got a sense that the mother dog was the leader of the pack. She set the routine and rules. Controlling a puppy’s freedom by crate training continues this pattern of looking for direction from the pack leader. Now, you can be her new pack leader.
- **The babysitter.** I also train my puppy to spend quiet time in the crate during the day. This is beneficial for several reasons. It gives me a “babysitter” option for when I can’t supervise my puppy. The crate gives them a safe place to den down and it also conditions them to settle down during the day when other things are going on. Using the crate to confine your pup helps prevent accidents in the house and destructive behavior. Doesn’t that sound like a good idea?



- **An outdoor kennel.** Start planning and saving your money now for an outdoor kennel if you think you would like your adult to spend time outside when you are gone. It is an investment, but one that will pay off in the long run. Spending \$1,000 proactive dollars is much better than \$3,000 spent after your dog has dug up sprinklers, landscaping or chewed the siding off your house! At about 6 months old you can start teaching them to spend time outside in the kennel while you are gone. That way they have more room to move around and have something to look at. At some point around this time your puppy cannot spend as much time confined indoors in the crate. They may start to go a little bonkers. It is not good for them. This is when I transition to the outdoor kennel.

Lastly, there is sooooo much information on the internet about how to crate train a puppy that there is no excuse to not do it properly. I can tell you from a professional standpoint that people who have taught their puppy to spend time alone in their crate have nicer puppies than those who don't. By nicer, I mean nicer to be around. Maybe another thing crate training teaches a puppy is how to self-settle; to control their impulses and desires. Wouldn't you like that in the long run? Of course you would.

**So, just decide to stick with it and YOU CAN DO IT!**



# *Start off Right with Puppy Pre-School*

## *My Puppy Preschool Class*

At my class you will learn how to...

- properly introduce a puppy to walking on a leash (what to do and not do at this age).
- teach the puppy not to jump up on your or anyone else.
- teach the puppy stay off the furniture.
- teach commands: sit, break, come, down, heel, stay, drop and take it.
- use the command “no” correctly.
- introduce the “out” command to stop barking.
- when and how to properly socialize your puppy to other dogs /people.
- lay a foundation for any future training (i.e. obedience, hunting, SAR...).

## *Training your puppy now will help him to...*

- see you as the authority figure in his life by taking an active and effective part in the learning process.
- set him up for an easier process when he starts adult training (about 6 months).
- develop self-esteem by giving him the joy of receiving reward for accomplishments.
- be comfortable in a variety of situations and places.



# *Protocol: Socializing before Fully Vaccinated*

## Protocol for the standard of care when socializing your puppy during vaccinations

### **7 weeks old to 10 weeks old: Socialize your puppy at home only.**

- Keep your new puppy at home.
- Go out of your way to have people come to the house during this time. Guests should include men & women, and children that will not scare the new pup.
- DO NOT have other dogs come to the house during this time.
- Focus on housebreaking your pup.
- Train your puppy to sleep in the crate in your bedroom at night.
- Train your puppy to tolerate being in the crate sometimes during the day for short periods of time. This can be as short as 5 minutes in the beginning up to 3-4 hours after they are used to it.

### **10 weeks old to 16 weeks: Socialize your pup carefully until it is fully vaccinated (around 16 weeks old)**

- Continue all of the steps above.
- Enroll your pup into my puppy preschool class.
- DO NOT walk your dog around where other dogs have gone to the bathroom (parks and rest areas are a big no no).
- DO NOT knowingly walk or drive where you know there has been Parvovirus. It lives in the ground for 7 years!
- DO NOT take your dog on vacation or travel during this time.
- Be creative with having your dog meet all kinds of people.
- Be careful with other dogs. Your dog is vulnerable to getting scared easily so avoid overbearing and aggressive dogs in public.



## **16 weeks old and on: Expose your puppy to the world**

- Take your pup off your property & away from your home at least 4 times a week for at least the next month.
- Take a pocket of kibble on walks and stop from time to time and work your commands in different places.
- Walk your puppy at night so it won't be afraid of the dark.
- Go to parks where lots of kids are playing and being active. Continue to protect your pup from scary experiences.
- Encourage your pup to do obstacles by going under things, over things or through things as this develops confidence.
- Walk your pup in and out of public buildings that allow dogs.

### *Puppy Preschool: An Important and Unique Socializing Experience*

Puppy Pre-school starts when puppies are 10 weeks old, if possible. It is worth mentioning that your puppy will not be fully vaccinated until it is 4 months old. **DO NOT WAIT** to socialize your puppy! This is a big mistake because we only have the first 6 months of your puppy's life to mold their personality (we call temperament). This is especially true with a dog that you want to train in a service or working capacity. But, a family pet **MUST** be social in order to be a welcome member of the family. This is the most important reason to enroll your puppy in my Puppy Preschool class. Until they are fully vaccinated a puppy's socialization **MUST** be done both properly & safely because they are vulnerable to viruses and negative socializing experiences. I will teach you how to socialize your puppy properly before and after they are fully vaccinated.



## **Position Statement on Puppy Socialization from the American Veterinary Society on Animal Behavior**

“The primary and most important time for puppy socialization is the first three months of life. During this time puppies should be exposed to as many new people, animals, stimuli and environments as can be achieved safely and without causing overstimulation manifested as excessive fear, withdrawal or avoidance behavior. For this reason, the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior believes that it should be the standard of care for puppies to receive such socialization before they are fully vaccinated. In general, puppies can start puppy socialization classes as early as 7-8 weeks of age. Puppies should receive a minimum of one set of vaccines at least 7 days prior to the first class and a first deworming. They should be kept up-to-date on vaccines throughout the class.”