

Puppy Development Chart

Development Stages of a dog	Age	Learning and Development	What you should be doing	Suggested Veterinary Care
Neonatal	Birth to 12 Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning begins Puppy can't see at all and he doesn't hear well. Mostly immobile, he stays close very close to mother and litter mates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breeder provides warm environment Early stress is beneficial- A good breeder handles the pups regularly and gently. This enables the dog to cope with stress more easily later in life. Puppy's rate of mental development will quickly depend on how complex their environment is. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breeder has puppies checked by a vet one to two days old to rule out birth defects
Transition Period	13 to 20 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eyes open, puppy can hear, begins to walk in a wobbly fashion By the end of this period the puppy starts to eliminate spontaneously. The puppy starts to take in solid food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good breeder provides a complex environment. This helps develop the puppy's perceptual and learning abilities. Ex: A variety of noises, surfaces to walk on, different people to meet and unique toys to play with. Visitors should remove shoes and wash hands before handling the pups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually nothing if pups are healthy
Primary Socialization Period	3 to 7 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sense of vision begins to develop; adult vision is reached at about 8 weeks of age. Puppy is able to use senses of sight and hearing. The puppy begins to learn from good experiences (i.e. with positive reinforcement) Learns from litter mates not to bite too hard. Learns to relate with other litter mates through play Mother guides the puppy's behavior Mother begins to wean the puppies between 4 to 8 weeks. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Responsible Breeder Checklist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is essential that the puppy remain with his mother and litter, at the breeder's location A complex, stimulating environment is essential to help develop the puppy's perceptual and learning abilities. Clear distinction between sleep and play area should be made. This ensures the puppy can leave his living area to eliminate. Each litter mate should have one-on-one contact with humans. Occasionally isolate puppy's to prepare them for separation. This is an excellent time to employ the use of a crate. A puppy that has been crate trained at the breeder will have an easier transition when they move to their new home. The breeder ensures the experience is a positive one. Exposure to a variety of noises and different floor surfaces is also important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually none if the pup is healthy First Visit Should Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialize puppy with vet clinic staff. Use yummy treats! Do handling exercises with the pup(ears, mouth, paws, body) Make sure the last thing that happens before you leave the clinic is fun for the puppy! With regular trips to the vet just for fun, you reduce the possibility of you adult dog developing an aversion to the clinic
Human Socialization period	Starts week 7 Ends somewhere between 12 and 14 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puppy should be completely weaned from mother This is the age when most rapid learning occurs Greatest impact on future social behavior will be made by any experience that happens at this point. The 'window of opportunity' is closing. Don't miss this very important learning opportunity for your puppy. Although puppies may still benefit from continued socialization, it is never as effective after 14 weeks of age. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually a puppy goes to the new home after 8 weeks of age. Absolute critical period in which puppy should be socialized-maximize this time! Enroll in a good puppy class. Ideal time to capitalize on educating your puppy. Take into account puppy's physical limitations and short attention span. Typically puppies can begin attending class after their 2nd set of vaccines, some time around 12 weeks of age. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate treats throughout the visit. Ensure socialization and handling exercises get done with the vet staff. Ask vet how to clip your pup's nails. Discuss your puppy's dental care The last thing you do prior to leaving the clinic should be FUN for the pup(uses treats and toys)
Fear Impact Period	8 to 11 weeks	<p><i>This period falls within the Human Socialization Period.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is when puppies start to learn from bad experiences, i.e. they remember bad things that happen to them. Anything that frightens the puppy during this period could have a more lasting effect than if occurred at any other time This is also a time when puppies are particularly easily frightened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trips to the vet need to be pleasant (take the puppy there just for fun). Vet staff can give the puppy a treat. Use fun, short sessions, and be positive because of "fear impact". This kind of mind set will enable you to be successful, as you continue to socialize your puppy. Avoid any potentially overwhelming circumstances you cannot personally oversee, such as shipping your pup in the cargo bay on an airplane. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually none if pup is healthy Drop by the clinic with your pup just for fun! Don't forget to bring your toys and treats. While you are at the clinic, don't forget to do the handling exercises. Concentrate on the week spots (hind legs often get forgotten).

Week 14 The time to easily socialize your puppy is coming to a close

Juvenile Period	Occurs between the socialization period and puberty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puppy has been in the home for approx. 4 weeks Pups will attempt to clarify and resolve their boundaries. Most of the height growth occurs during this period and ends by puberty Puppy begins to mature sexually: male begins to lift leg, female has first heat period usually between 6 to 12 months. Some dogs may be earlier, some later than that. Puppy coat being replaced by more distinct adult coat. Timing depends on the breed He will be uncomfortable because his adult teeth are growing in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> So long as you provide structure and healthy management of your puppy's time, this transition should be relatively painless Puppy should be attending a socialization class by now. <p>If these things have not been provided for, all heck is about to break loose!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss rabies vaccine with your vet Check with vet to see if a stool sample is required. Discuss heartworm prevention program with your vet.
Adolescent Period	Starts with puberty and ends with social maturity	<p>A puppy will test his wings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He may test to see if all the rules are still the same He may not come when called. He may not play fetch even though he once did. Your consistency and predictability are essential right now. 	<p>It is because of this stage that prevention over cure is advocated – you must start socializing and training before now! When you notice a change in your dog during this time, he is probably going through puberty: your puppy is changing physiologically. Your awareness of these changes in behavior will help you get through this commonly difficult period.</p> <p>This is the time when obedience schools get most of their calls. Puppies that have not been socialized and worked with take a different path than pups that have.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your puppy will still go through this period regardless of your good early work – be aware of the change and ride it out. Be prepared with appropriate chew bones (large enough so that the pup won't choke) to help with your pup's need to chew. Use a long line in the park if your pup is not coming when called. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss spay or neuter of your dog with your vet- book an appointment! Consider Micro-chipping your dog. Check with vet to see if stool sample is required
Second Fear Impact Period Lasts approx. 3 weeks	Can occur before puberty, but may occur between 5 and 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May suddenly be apprehensive about new things or shy or timid of new people or situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your puppy appears apprehensive, avoid confrontation. Building confidence through training is a worthwhile effort. Avoid any potential overwhelming circumstances you can not personally oversee, such as shipping your pup in the cargo bay on an airplane. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop by vet clinic for handling exercises (ears, mouth, paws and body) just for fun. Your puppy should be comfortable going into the vet clinic.
Maturity	1 to 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refers to social maturity Smaller dogs mature earlier. Larger dogs later. If you were lax in your work earlier on, you may now see the things you have missed: object guarding, unfavorable reactions towards unfamiliar people, animals, or things that your dog missed during the socialization stage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Until this period has been reached, it is recommended that your pup remains crated or the equivalent (structure) when you are not available to supervise his behavior. You will know when your dog is trust worthy by testing him for short periods (10-15 min.) while you leave the house. If your dog is damaging property while loose, he is not ready. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return for yearly check up. Possible x-ray for hip dysplasia