



Sounds Sociable

How to make the best
impression on your
new puppy

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The importance of early experience for puppies

During the period from four to twelve weeks of age puppies are exceptionally receptive to new experiences. Their brains are still developing, and they need to gather as much information about their environment as they can. This is why puppies are so active and inquisitive.

Good or bad experiences during this time can leave an indelible mark on the puppy's development and determine the kind of dog that it will grow into. If the puppy has to compete for food or toys then it may become an aggressively competitive adult. If it does not meet many dogs it may become antisocial or unable to cope with meeting new dogs. If your puppy does not encounter traffic noises then it may dislike going on walks near to roads.

There are two common situations when puppies are likely to exhibit fear responses. The first is when you take the puppy home and it shows fearfulness of some of the normal every day objects and sounds in its new home. The second is when you start taking the puppy out of the house and find that it is afraid of cars, people and other every day events in the outside world.

Nobody wants a fearful, competitive or antisocial dog, and these problems can be prevented if we manage the puppy's experience during the early part of its life correctly.

Breeders should provide puppies with a large selection of toys to play with and several food bowls to eat from so that puppies do not have to compete with litter-mates. They should also introduce the puppies to plenty of unfamiliar people, including well-behaved children. Breeders should also play the Sounds Sociable tracks for the puppies, so that they become familiar with normal domestic noises.

There are some other things you can easily do, to ensure that your puppy gets the widest possible experience and develops into a sociable pet:

- Contact your local vet to find out whether they run Puppy Parties.
- Invite all of your friends and family to meet your new puppy regularly.
- Take your puppy to meet friends and family.
- Start taking your puppy out to new places, and to meet more people as soon as it is safe to do so. Remember that you can minimise the risk of encountering possible infection by carrying your puppy when you are away from home.

Why play sounds to your puppy?

Our homes and the streets around them are full of loud and unfamiliar noises that many dogs become afraid of. You may have previously owned a dog who didn't like heavy traffic, fireworks, or the sound of the dishwasher. Dogs that have not experienced a wide range of different noises during their puppy-hood are at risk of developing excessive sensitivity to sound, which can lead to other problems. A dog that is nervous around traffic, for example, will find it harder to feel comfortable meeting new people or other dogs on the street and this can lead to problems of aggression or unsociability.

This is made worse because many puppies are reared in quiet rural kennels, but then live in a busy family home in a noisy town. This is very tough change for a dog to cope with.

The sounds accompanying this booklet include all of the ones that puppies find new or slightly scary. These include domestic noises such as the sound of laughter, children playing, vacuum cleaners, dishwashers and running water. There are also sounds of outdoor noises like traffic, aircraft and trains. We have also included some unusual noises, such as the sound of applause or metal cages rattling. These help if your dog has to go to the vet or you want to go to a dog show.

The sounds are specifically designed to get puppies used to noises, and it must not be used to treat dogs with sound phobias.

Instructions for breeders:

Look at the track listing and identify any noises that the mother of the puppies may be afraid of. Puppies learn to fear the things that they see their mother frightened of them, so you must not play these sounds when the puppies are with their mother.

The remaining noises should be played to the puppies every day from birth until the puppies go to their new home. The new puppy owner can

Instructions for new puppy owners:

For best results your puppy's breeder should have play the sounds to the puppies a lot before you bring your puppy home. If your breeder does not have a copy of Sounds Sociable then you can lend them yours.

Your puppy's breeder may have chosen not to play certain track, so check which ones your puppy has already been exposed to.

After taking your puppy home you should begin by playing the sounds daily, but miss out the noises that your breeder did not play. If your breeder did not use the sounds at all then you will also need to miss out the noises that have a star symbol next to them. These are the more scary noises. Play the sounds each day for 3-4 days before introducing the all remaining tracks. This will allow your puppy to settle in and feel safe before hearing noises that could potentially be more frightening.

Instructions for playing the sounds

All of the sounds tracks are set to play at the same level so that you don't need to change the playback volume for each track.

If you play the noises at a high level they might be quite unpleasant to listen to, especially for a young puppy. So you need to start by playing them at a low level, gradually building up the sound volume over a few days. If your puppy shows signs of fear while you are playing the sounds, you should stop. Play the sounds at a lower volume next time.

If other dogs are present while you are playing Sounds Sociable it is important that they also look relaxed and don't bark or run away when they hear any of the noises. Only use the sounds when other dogs are present if they stay relaxed while it is playing.

- For best results the sounds should be played on an audio system that is capable of reproducing the sounds realistically. The speakers should be positioned several feet apart if possible. You could use your music system, or the surround system you use with your television set.
- Put a small sticker next to the volume control on your audio system so that you can mark the approximate level at which you are playing the sounds. Some amplifiers have a digital readout so that you can read the sound level directly.
- Each time you play the sounds make sure that you set the level so that you don't frighten your puppy.
- Use the programme button on your player to choose which tracks you are going to play, if you want to miss some of them out.
- Play the Sounds Sociable tracks twice daily.

First impressions

First impressions are lasting impressions. Although we need time to get to know someone, we often make a snap judgement of them. This can happen in as little as one tenth of a second, but the effect can last a lifetime. If you don't like someone the first time you meet them, the chances are that you will never take the time to get to know them.

When a puppy moves into a new home, they need to make an immediate judgement of us and the place they now live in. This is why we must make a really good impression during the first few weeks after the puppy joins our home.

Imagine what it is like when you invite someone to your home for the first time. You think about that person and what they might like. What wine or coffee do they like? What music? What food? You tidy your home and arrange it so that it is comfortable and inviting to the visitor. What you are actually doing is making your home as appealing to that person as you can whilst also presenting the best side of yourself.

Now imagine that your visitor has a young child with them. You have a large collection of glass ornaments on low shelves in the main living room where you sit with guests. So, you have a choice; you can either put the ornaments somewhere safe, or you can spend the entire evening watching the child and repeatedly scolding it for going near the ornaments. Which would give the best impression to your friend and the child?

The process of bringing a new puppy into the home should be just the same. The more you think about how to prepare your home to accept the new pet, the more likely that you will create the kind of relaxed and happy atmosphere that will forge a great relationship.

If you are about to bring a new pet into the home, you should start by clearing away anything that is valuable, fragile or hazardous to the pet. For example, puppies often chew small items like remote controls, so get into the habit of putting yours on a shelf out of reach. The same kinds of childproofing locks that we use to keep young children out of cupboards are great for keeping puppies out too. If you don't want your pet to go upstairs, or into a particular room, install a suitable baby-gate.

If you already have a puppy and you find yourself constantly tense, watchful and irritable with it, you probably need to make a few changes to the home.

Before you bring your puppy home

Owners often report that the people that their pet is most attached to are the ones that it met while it was still with living with the breeder. This is because being in a supportive environment with its mum, litter-mates and people it is already acquainted with makes it easier for the young animal to meet new people. It can quickly become familiar with a new person, and become attached to them. On the day of leaving the breeder to move to its new home, the puppy will turn to these people as a source of security.

So, it is important that all family members go to see the new puppy at the breeder on at least one occasion before taking it home. The more visits the better. On the day when you take the puppy home, don't be in a rush. Be prepared to spend some time with the puppy at the breeder's home before you start the journey home.

The journey home

You may already have your puppy at home, but if you haven't here are some hints for how to make the journey home easier. The first car journey can be stressful for puppies and they may learn to be afraid of car travel. Here is a simple routine for avoiding this:

- Ask the breeder to give you a piece of the bedding your puppy slept on with its mother.
- Place this on a travel blanket, so that your puppy is comfortable and has a familiar scent nearby.
- If you have a supply of Adaptil® spray then apply several squirts of it onto the travel blanket and leave this in your car for 10 minutes before you put your puppy in the car. Adaptil® is available from your vet.
- The puppy should travel on an empty stomach so it must not have had food within 2 hours of the car journey.
- Sit with the puppy on the travel blanket on your lap, or next to you on the rear passenger seat. It is important to be able to hold and brace the young animal so that it does not slide around during the journey.
- Once in the car with the puppy, wait for about 5 minutes before starting the engine, so that it can get used to being in the car. Then start the engine and wait a further 5 minutes to let the puppy get used to the noise. If possible drive slowly around the block for a few minutes to allow the puppy get used to the car movements.
- If the journey is long, break it into several short sections of no longer than 30 minutes each. During these breaks your puppy can go to the toilet or lap some water from a bowl. Do not allow the puppy to drink too much at one go, because this can cause nausea.
- Do not get angry if your puppy is sick or urinates in the car, because this will just increase stress and anxiety.

Early problems

So, you've prepared the home for your new puppy, and the journey home went well.

Puppies are still developing, and they need to learn some very basic things, such as where to go to the toilet, how to communicate with people and what they can and cannot do during play. How we handle these issues can make a huge difference to whether the puppy trusts us in the future.

We are going to cover:

- Getting your puppy to sleep overnight.
- House training.
- Introducing you puppy to the great outdoors.
- Selecting appropriate treats.
- Preventing scratching and biting during play.
- Car travel for puppies.

Getting your puppy to sleep overnight

The traditional advice given to puppy owners is that puppies should be made to sleep on their own from the first night in the new home. However this will often make puppies anxious and result in them crying and barking all night and disturbing the owners, and the neighbours. Before long many owners react to the disturbance by allowing the puppy up into the bedroom and the new arrival ends up sleeping snuggled up next to their owners in bed with them! Ideally puppies should ultimately sleep away from their owners, because we do not want them to become over-dependent.

However, the first night in a new home is already stressful and we don't want to make this worse by isolating the puppy somewhere like a cold kitchen. The following are some basic instructions that should enable your puppy to feel safe on the first few nights in the new home, whilst also encouraging independence so that he or she is able to sleep away from you once settled in.

Preparations:

- Provide a comfortable enclosed basket (with high sides) so that your puppy feels protected and secure.
- This should contain a 'nest' of comfortable blankets.
- Include a small piece of bedding from the nest your puppy slept in with its mother and litter-mates.
- Keep the basket in the lounge or where you spend time with your puppy during the day.

- If you have a supply of Adaptil® spray then apply it onto your puppy's bed several times each day. Alternatively install an Adaptil® diffuser next to the puppy's bed. Adaptil® products are available from your vet.
- If your puppy falls asleep during the day, put it into this bed. This is particularly important if it falls asleep on your lap.
- It also helps if you keep a warm, but not hot, water bottle under the blankets so that the bed is comforting to sleep in.

Before bedtime:

- The period before bedtime should be quiet and relaxing. Don't play any games with your puppy during the last hour before bedtime.
- Give your puppy a small meal of overcooked rice about an hour before bedtime, as this will increase sleepiness.
- Take your puppy out to the toilet about 20 minutes after this meal.
- Put a warm, but not hot, water bottle under the blankets to warm them through and provide something for the puppy to snuggle into.
- If your puppy falls asleep during the time before you go to bed then put him or her into the dog bed and resist the temptation to continue cuddling.
- At bedtime move the bed upstairs and place it in your bedroom close to your bed.

During the night

- Ignore any cries or whining and let your puppy settle on his or her own.
- If you are concerned that your puppy needs to go to the toilet in the night then get up and take it to the toilet but do not give any food, attention, games or cuddles, otherwise your pet will learn to wake you up to get these instead.
- Do not allow the puppy onto your bed.
- Never play games with the puppy in the bedroom, this is somewhere to sleep.

The first couple of nights are the most stressful for your pet, and once these are over you need to get him or her used to sleeping further away from you. The most important things are that you do not allow the puppy to sleep on your bed with you, and that when your puppy falls asleep at any time, you put him or her into the bed that you have provided. This means that your puppy will get used to the bed as a resting place and you will find that he or she

begins to go there to sleep. This will make it far easier for your puppy to be alone and to travel with you to other people's houses because he or she always has a familiar resting place.

Once your puppy is sleeping well in this bed you should start to move it further away from your bed, and then gradually out of the room to the place where you want your puppy to sleep.

Housetraining your puppy

Housetraining is a common point of conflict between puppies and their new owners. Most puppies will urinate or defecate in the home within a few hours of arriving. Unfortunately we tend to react by getting cross, and this can frighten the puppy very badly. After all, the puppy has no reason to like, or trust, us at this point.

It is therefore very important to prepare yourself for housetraining and make sure that all family members and friends know that it is wrong to scold or smack the puppy. Pushing a puppy's nose in its mess will not help with housetraining, and the puppy will just begin to think that human beings are unpredictable and aggressive.

Dealing with mistakes:

Mistakes will happen, and your puppy will occasionally make a mess in the house until it is fully housetrained.

- If you catch your puppy making a mess somewhere, then say 'no' in a calm voice (not angrily) and quickly take the puppy to the place that you wish to be used as the toilet. Then reward him/her for finishing off there.
- If you find a mess which your puppy has done earlier, just clean it up. Don't get cross with your puppy.

When you clean up, try to avoid strong smelling cleaners like bleach or pine-scented disinfectant. These may mark the place with a strong smell that encourages the puppy to use it as a latrine. Instead use odourless cleaners after you have thoroughly cleaned the area with soapy water. After cleaning, apply a biologically based scent-free deodoriser spray.

Housetraining method for puppies:

Puppies tend to need to go to the toilet within 20 minutes of a meal or a period of sleep. You should take your puppy to the toilet area at these times, and regularly every 60 minutes during the day until you can see a pattern to when your puppy needs to go to the toilet.

Designate a toilet place in the garden. It should be an obvious place, preferably somewhere that your puppy has previously used. If you have to mop up urine in the house then wring the cloths out onto this toilet spot occasionally so that it is marked with a smell of urine.

- At the appropriate times, calmly put your puppy on a lead and take him into the garden. Remain completely passive and do not interact with your puppy in any way.
- Walk to the chosen toilet spot and circle it a couple of times. Continue to stay calm and ignore your puppy.
- Stand still and quietly mutter the command you want your puppy to respond to.
- Wait for up to 5 minutes.
- If your puppy goes to the toilet wait until he is almost finished.
- Just as your puppy has finished going to the toilet say 'good dog', then give a reward, praise and attention. Let your puppy off the lead to sniff around the garden. Play a game for a couple of minutes.
- If your puppy does not go to the toilet, silently lead him back inside without even taking the lead off. Try taking your puppy outside again a little later.

As you repeat this training you should gradually raise the level of your voice to a normal level of speech when you give the command. You will find that your puppy rapidly comes to understand that it should go to the toilet whenever let into the garden or given a command. You can reinforce this by following the same housetraining routine when you go to the park. In public places it may not be acceptable to allow your puppy to run free, so you may have to use a strong extending lead to control your puppy during the play session after he or she has gone to the toilet.

It is important to restrict your puppy's ability to make mistakes. Keep your puppy supervised at all times when you are at home and take him to go to the toilet before you go out. Also consider using an indoor kennel to confine your puppy while you are out. If you do use an indoor kennel your puppy must be acclimatised to it first. Talk to your veterinary surgeon or local behaviourist about this. Dogs will rarely soil their own bed area so this prevents accidents while you are not around. A normal puppy may take 3-4 weeks to become reasonably well housetrained.

Taking your puppy out for the first time.

It is important to let your puppy mix with lots of people and well-behaved dogs from the earliest possible opportunity. However, you need to be careful about how and where you do this. You should talk to your local veterinary surgeon to find out more about the diseases that may affect dogs in your area so that you can take proper precautions,

including vaccination. Until your puppy is vaccinated you should avoid letting it walk in public places where infected or unvaccinated dogs may have been. Instead get your friends to visit with their vaccinated dogs and take your puppy to other people's homes. You should also carry your puppy in your arms to meet people and experience noises, smells and activities in the real world outside the home.

Before you start to take your puppy on walks, you should spend some time getting your puppy used to wearing a collar and lead in the house and garden. If you play the Sounds Sociable tracks twice daily as instructed, by the time your puppy starts to go out on walks, it should be more relaxed around traffic, and other potentially scary, noises.

As soon as it is safe for your puppy to go outside, you should start to take your puppy on lots of short walks, going to a wide variety of different kinds of places. It is very easy for puppies to get used to park and rural locations, because they aren't noisy and full of activity. Urban environments are much more challenging. So, if you live in a rural location, you will need to make the effort to take your puppy into villages, towns and cities.

Signs of stress

It is very important not to frighten your puppy and you need to be able to spot the signs that your puppy is overwhelmed by what is happening.

The commonest signs of stress in puppies are trembling, panting, yawning, lip-licking and restlessness (agitation or shifting around). You may be surprised that yawning and lip-licking are listed as signs of stress. Clearly, there are times when a puppy, or adult dog, will yawn because it is sleepy, or lick its lips because it is expecting food. However, if you see yawning and lip-licking when your puppy is not about to go to sleep or have food, then this can be an indication of stress. If you see these signs, look at what is going on around you and think about whether there is anything new or potentially stressful for your puppy. It could be a noisy or busy place, or perhaps there are people or animals that your pup has never met before.

If you see signs of stress, take your puppy out of the situation and allow it to calm down again before going back. For example, if your puppy gets stressed when near a busy road, take it into a quiet back street or park and allow it to settle down before returning to a busier location. Make a note of the kinds of situations in which your puppy shows signs of stress.

As stress increases, a puppy will try to hide or defend itself by growling, baring its teeth or snapping. If your puppy reacts like this when he or she meets people it is very important that you do not get cross or punish your puppy. You must also not push your puppy too far, so resist the temptation to restrain your puppy so that an unfamiliar person can stroke him or her. Instead it is better to remember the situations that upset your puppy and try to introduce them more gently next time. For example, ask a stranger to stand and chat for a few minutes before offering the puppy a treat or better still to stand and chat while you give your puppy its food rewards. This will win the puppy over much more quickly and increase his or her confidence.

There is some scientific evidence that puppies that wear an Adaptil® collar for the first few weeks after going into a new home adapt more successfully and experience fewer behaviour problems as they grow up. We would recommend that you use an Adaptil® collar, which is available through your vet or from a number of online retailers.

Treats: what not to give to puppies

We need to remember that puppies are quite small and should not be given large quantities of any food that they are not used to eating. Stick to giving small treats, because it is very easy to cause vomiting and diarrhoea. The early part of development relies on your puppy staying fit and healthy so stick to a safe complete dog diet that your puppy can digest easily.

There are a few human foods that puppies and dogs must not be given, even in small amounts:

- Grapes or raisins
- Onions
- Chocolate

Dogs should also not be given caffeinated drinks like tea, coffee or soft drinks, and they should not be given alcohol. Certain foods contain parts that ought not to be eaten, such as the pips from apples or the core of peaches and plums. These can contain poisons like cyanide. If you are unsure whether a particular food is safe to give to your dog then consult your veterinary surgeon for additional advice.

Play biting

When your new puppy comes home it will have spent most of his time playing rough games with its litter-mates. Dogs don't have hands to hold things with so they tend to grab and bite with their mouths. This is normal when puppies are

very young, but most of them will rapidly learn to stop play biting when their mother and litter-mates become intolerant of that sort of interaction. Learning to control biting is a very valuable part of a puppy's development.

Puppies will often play bite when you stroke them or during play. In particular, when you stroke a puppy on the shoulders or face they will often accept it for a few seconds and then begin to mouth or nip.

The worst thing you can do is to get cross or punish your puppy, because they are only acting playfully. Under no circumstances should you smack or shout at your puppy, or pick it up to shake it, or forcefully hold it on its back to punish it.

You need to train your puppy to understand that stroking and petting are not invitations to play.

To teach your puppy to accept hand contact, without play biting, follow this simple training method:

- Choose a time when your puppy is already relaxed or sleepy.
- Get some food treats and sit down with your puppy.
- Reach out and touch your puppy firmly but gently. At the same time offer a few bits of food from your cupped hand.
- Stroke your puppy while he eats the food.
- If your puppy attempts to play bite then say 'no' quite quietly and look away. Take your hand off your puppy and withdraw the food. Wait for a few seconds and then try stroking again.
- Repeat this training, gradually building up from touching and stroking your puppy on the chest and neck, to touching all over the head, body and legs.

Practice this training several times each day.

We want a puppy to understand that hands are always friendly and are not associated with punishment or play. Otherwise a puppy may misjudge why you are holding out your hand and may bite.

There are some other simple rules that help to teach your puppy that hand contact is only ever friendly:

- Never smack, hit or kick your puppy.
- Do not grab your puppy's collar to discipline him.
- Do not play rough and tumble games that involve hands or feet.
- Only play games that involve a toy. For example, you can play quite rough games with your puppy as long as you only do these with a toy in the hand that is in contact with him.

- If your puppy bites during play then say 'no' and stop the game for a few seconds.
- After the game, put the toy away in a cupboard.
- During the game stop play every 30 seconds to get your puppy to wait, sit down and take a few food treats instead of playing.

Car travel

For many puppies the journey to their new home is also their first journey by car. This journey is associated with feelings of anxiety, both about being in a car and about being taken away from their mother, as well as with nausea due to motion sickness. This is where many dogs begin a lifelong dislike of car travel. To make matters worse, the second car journey often takes puppies to the vet!

The Sounds Sociable tracks includes sounds recorded from inside moving cars and trains and if your breeder has already been using Sounds Sociable your puppy will already be used to these noises. If possible it is also beneficial to ask your breeder to put the puppies in the car a few times before they are homed. It is even better if they can make a couple of short journeys around the block to get your puppy used to the movement of the car.

Dogs can suffer from a number of problems associated with car travel. They may bark at things as they drive by, they may get overexcited and whine or cry, or they can get fearful or travel sick. These problems are mostly preventable if you start to teach your puppy how to travel in the car from the earliest possible age. Your puppy needs to know where to sit in the car, and to stay calm until the journey ends.

So, once you have brought your puppy home you need to get your puppy completely used to car travel. The following simple advice should help:

- Play the Sounds Sociable tracks daily, as instructed, so that your puppy gets used to all of the noises that he or she may encounter outside the home.
- Take your puppy on a short car journey around the block every day. This should be no more than 2-5 minutes of driving on slow roads.
- Provide a blanket in a rear foot-well for your puppy to travel on.
- Before each journey spray Adaptil® into the car and onto the blanket 10 minutes before travel, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

- A helper should sit on a rear seat during the first few journeys, to give the puppy some company. This person should ignore any whining or crying by the puppy, but can stroke and talk to the puppy when he or she has calmed down.
- Once the puppy is in the car, wait for about minutes before starting the engine, and then a further 5 minutes with the engine running before moving off. This allows the puppy to get used to being in the car and hearing the engine.

Once your puppy is getting used to these journeys you can extend their length by a few minutes each day and start to include higher speed driving on motorways. At this stage it is important that the *most* of the journeys are circular; you arrive back home without going to the park or anywhere else exciting. Car travel can overexcite puppies if they think that the car always takes them to the park. These pups will start to bark and whine in the car in anticipation of their exciting destination.

Conclusions

Preparing puppies for life in a domestic environment is an essential part of the process for preventing behavioural problems in adulthood. Sounds Sociable is designed to help you to give your puppy the very best start in life. However, problems can still arise and if you are worried about any aspect of your dog's behaviour it is important to seek professional help as soon as possible. Your veterinary practice will be able to give you advice and will also be able to refer you to a local reputable behaviour counsellor if that is necessary.

Track Listing

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 Ambient environments | 25 Washing and cleaning |
| 2 Construction noises | 26 Hail |
| 3 Engines | 27 Applause |
| 4 Animals | 28 Bleeps |
| 5 In the car | 29 Letter boxes, knocking, bins* |
| 6 Aircraft | 30 Bells, buzzers, doorbells* |
| 7 Cooking | 31 Whistles and whooshes* |
| 8 Doors | 32 Bangs* |
| 9 Footsteps | 33 Fireworks* |
| 10 Bathroom | 34 Guns* |
| 11 Miscellaneous domestic sounds | 35 Thunder* |
| 12 Miscellaneous outdoor sounds | 36 Alarms* |
| 13 Miscellaneous transport sounds | 37 Growling and barking* |
| 14 Motorbikes | |
| 15 Office | |
| 16 Telephones | |
| 17 Traffic | |
| 18 Vacuum cleaners | |
| 19 Veterinary clinic | |
| 20 Train, tube, bus | |
| 21 Garden and DIY | |
| 22 Children | |
| 23 Baby | |
| 24 Water noises | |

The sound tracks marked * are ones that some dogs will react to. They are also sounds that have the potential to alarm a puppy. If the puppy's mother, or another dog in the household, already reacts to any of these sounds, then these tracks should not be played when that dog is present. When playing them to the puppy for the first time, start with a lower sound volume to avoid causing a fearful reaction.

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