



Are YOU Ready for Your Puppy?

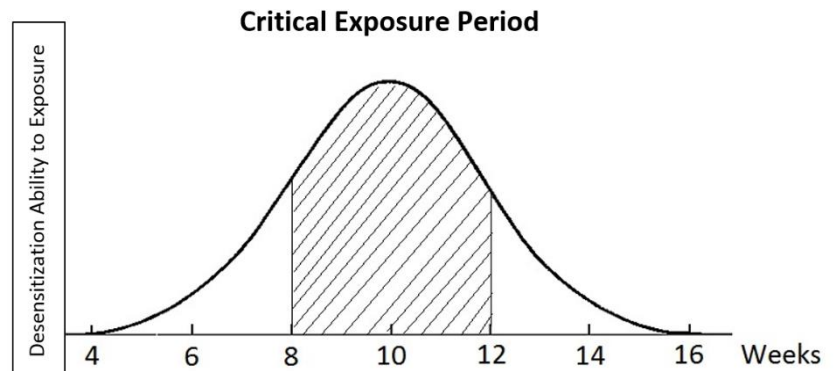
Are you considering adopting or rescuing a puppy (re: younger than 18 weeks old)? Are you days away from introducing your puppy into your home? Make sure you have all your ducks in a row by following the guide below.

Exposure

Perhaps the most important thing to consider before bringing your puppy home is creating a daily exposure strategy. Most people bring home a puppy around 8 weeks old and, typically at that point, her life has been limited to only a few people, her mother, and her littermates.

All puppies go through a “Critical Exposure” window (shown in the diagram below). This is a very short period of time where your

puppy is most receptive to being positively exposed to all the things you would expect her to be okay with later in life (note: 8-12 week prime time). When that window closes, the things your puppy has not yet been exposed to enough may become fear-inducing. To make sure your puppy is as well balanced and happy as possible, plan on exposing your puppy to:



- ◆ 100 new people, especially men, before the exposure window closes
 - Invite as many people as you can over to your house to meet your puppy
 - Take your puppy to a café or coffee shop
 - Bring lots of food and yummy treats for people to give while meeting your puppy
- ◆ Other puppies *at least* once per week
 - Utilize local puppy class and/or puppy socialization groups
- ◆ Children
 - Playgrounds can be used if there are not a lot of other dogs present
 - Try taking your puppy outside an elementary school when they are being let out – children and parents will give your puppy a good range of people to be introduced to!
- ◆ Loud sounds – construction sites, busy streets
- ◆ Crowds – farmers markets, home depot

Avoid: densely populated dog areas, like dog parks, until your puppy has had all of her vaccinations.

Confinement

- ◆ Short-term confinement area = puppy can hold her bladder while you are away



The wire crate shown here is a great style to use. Place a plush dog bed or blanket inside for your dog to sleep on. These crates also come with a detachable inner wall that can adjust the inside length so that you can purchase a full-size crate right away. Adjust the inner wall to *no more* than the length of your puppy!

- ◆ Long-term confinement area = puppy cannot hold her bladder while you are away



The wire x-pen shown here connects perfectly to the wire crate, giving a safe enclosure to leave your puppy for extended period of time. The enclosure should contain: comfortable bedding inside the crate; water bowl; puppy chew item; filled kong inside crate; kibble dispensing puzzle; pee-pad.

Use the long-term confinement area as an aid in keeping your puppy out of trouble. If you cannot devote all of your attention to your puppy, she should go into the long-term confinement area. Keep in mind that everything in your puppy's reach is "fair game" to get into and chew on until otherwise instructed. Meal time and mental enrichment puzzles should be given in the long-term confinement area as well.

*Routinely normalizing the experience of being alone throughout every day -- *even when you are home* - will help your puppy grow up content with being left alone. Do not give ANY attention to a whining or attention-seeking barking puppy. Wait until your puppy has exhausted that option and is quiet before giving her what she wants!

Potty Training Routine

Potty training should begin IMMEDIATELY when you bring your puppy home. Each accident that happens is a learning experience that inside is an okay place to eliminate, so be very diligent to avoid as many accidents as possible. Provide excellent, high-value treat reward directly after your puppy goes in the designated outdoor potty area.

Ideal potty-training management schedule

1. Determine max bladder-holding time – age approximation = 1 hour for every month old the puppy is (this should be adjusted if your puppy has an accident)
2. After first morning elimination, set timer for half an hour less than the max time

3. After that timer goes off, place puppy in the short term confinement area for half an hour – placing your puppy in an area where she is *least* likely to have an accident during the time when she is *most* likely to have an accident (dogs inherently will hold in their bladder in the area they sleep)
4. After that timer goes off, bring puppy immediately to the potty area with three high value treats
 - a. Wait calmly and quietly for 3-5 minutes until she eliminates
5. If puppy goes, immediately give the three treats one at a time (verbal praise and excitement allowed too!)
6. If puppy does not go, return her to the crate for 5 minutes, repeat steps 4 and 5 until puppy eliminates
7. Come back in after elimination and have some well-deserved play time, or take puppy on a short walk around the neighborhood

Mental Enrichment Items & Toys

Dogs are designed to scavenge, chew, hunt and dissect (rip things apart). Instead of punishing these behaviors, teach your puppy constructively that certain items are off limits by interrupting and redirecting towards items that are created for giving outlets for their instinctive needs. Take time to research and browse your local pet store to see what they have in stock. Below are just a few picture examples of the things that can help keep your puppy's mind active and enriched.

◆ Kongs



◆ Tug toy



◆ Kibble-dispensing puzzles



◆ Mental enrichment puzzles



◆ Dissecting toys



◆ Chew Items

