

Puppy Socialization Checklist

For Giant Breed Puppies (8 Weeks to 6 Months)

Lay the groundwork for a calm, confident adult dog.

Early Handling & Body Awareness

- Touch paws, ears, tail, and mouth gently every day
 - Practice putting on and removing collar and harness
 - Get pup used to being picked up and held briefly (if possible)
 - Introduce basic grooming tools (brush, towel, nail file)
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Environmental Exposure

- Explore different textures: grass, gravel, pavement, slippery floors
 - Visit calm, quiet outdoor locations for safe observing
 - Acclimate to common sounds (vacuum, blender, traffic) using sound recordings if needed
 - Experience movement: car rides, stroller walks (viewing from a distance), shopping carts nearby
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People & Handling by Strangers

- Calm introductions to people of all ages, including children
 - Expose to people with mobility aids, hats, sunglasses, masks
 - Practice structured greetings: “sit before pet,” “wait for approach”
 - Experience gentle handling by others (under your supervision)
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Dogs & Animals

- Controlled introductions to fully vaccinated, calm adult dogs
 - Attend safe puppy play groups with supervision
 - Observe dogs playing from a distance to learn canine body language
 - Practice neutral walk-bys on leash
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Routine & Resilience

- Visit vet clinic just to say hi and get treats
 - Practice crate time with positive associations
 - Reinforce calm behavior in new places, like pet stores or outdoor cafes
 - Begin teaching puppy to settle in new environments
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Owner Habits & Social Recovery

- Watch for signs of social fatigue (yawning, disengaging, stress signals)
- Build in decompression: naps, calm time, low-stimulation environments
- Praise curiosity but never force interaction
- Keep sessions short, positive, and repeat often