# **SOCIALISATION & HABITUATION PROGRAME**

The importance of socialisation and habituation cannot be underestimated. There have been many studies proving that early encounters and the resulting learning can set the dog up on the right or wrong path for life.

## **NEW PUPPY FROM AROUND 8 WEEKS**

These are the things you can be doing during the time that the dog is in the incubation period of his inoculations. Your vet will have said dot let him go out until he is about 12 weeks of age. Your vet is quite rightly thinking about your pet’s immunity to illnesses that can be fatal in dogs. However, this does not take care of the mental needs of the dog – but you can do something about this while keeping your dog safe.

### **CHECKLIST GUIDELINES**

**Individuality** - Obviously, the list is by no means set in stone. You will be able to add differing situations to your list of accomplishments. But with this, you know what to look out for and go in search of.

**Consider Risk** - Also, some of these encounters involve other people, children and animals – make sure you do not put any person or animal at risk of fear or injury during your training – all encounters should be under full control and risk assessed.

**Prioritise** - Consider what the dog needs to know or be able to do first – for example - it will be worth working on a good ‘leave on command’ before introducing your dog to cats for the first time. Before introducing your dog to someone to greet, it would be useful to have taught him to sit or stand still and be stroked or simply keep still even if not going to the touching stage.

**Take Precautions** - For each situation consider how you will approach it and what precautions need to be taken. For example, meeting people does not mean jumping all over them. Many people will not like this, and it may cause fear or injury to the young, vulnerable or frail. Not all dogs can tolerate other dogs well – any meeting or play session should be controlled and agreed upon with all concerned.

### **DON’T DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD**

**Development stages** - Pay particular attention to the dog’s development stages. Be ready for changes in behaviour and allow for them to give the dog more time when necessary e.g., second fear impact stage, adolescence etc. as well as preventing problems occurring e.g., running off during flight instinct period.

**Gradual Exposure** - Ensure that you approach with care and use gradual exposure techniques like systematic desensitisation. For example, if a dog is clearly reluctant he is likely fearful, go back to a place where he is not fearful and build up his confidence over time. This may take more than one session – it is better to move on over several sessions than put the dog into a panic that may have a lasting effect on his confidence.

**Treat trails** are often an effective technique, especially if you anticipate a problem. For example, something that the dog has to encounter that would seem strange – like a statue of a dog in a shopping area. Lay a trail of treats to the statue and some on it if you can so that the dog doesn’t fear it or at least gets a good experience on that first encounter.

### **CHECKLIST CHALLENGE**

Do not consider the checklist as a challenge to be fulfilled as fast as possible -moreover, it is a bit like a doggy bucket list which we should try to complete before he is fully mature. The more you can pack in the better, however, not at all costs. The dog will need to go at a speed that he can cope with – so take your time but keep looking for new adventures that will incorporate things from your list. Spend time on your training of the basics to gain good control during the process. Both are equally important.

Most importantly support your dog and be his friend, not his enemy. Enjoy your time together and your relationship will grow into the best you can have.

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| PEOPLE |  |  |  |  |  |
| PEOPLE | Umbrella □  | With Stick □  | Wheelchair □  | Jogging □ | Elderly □ |
|  | Helmets □ | Hats □ | Uniform □ | Cycling □ | In a Car □ |
|  | Seated □ | In Crowds □ | Delivery □ | Visitor □ | Injured □ |
|  | Homeless □ | Shop Assistant □ | Someone to ignore □ | Someone to greet □ |  |
| WOMEN | Large □ | Small □ | Loud □ | Quiet □ | Made up □ |
|  | Glasses □ | Sunglasses □ | In a dress □ | Dressed up □ | Other □ |
| MEN | Big □ | Small □ | Loud □ | Quiet □ | Bearded □ |
|  | Glasses □ | Deep Voice □ | Uniformed □ |  | Other □ |
| TEENAGERS | Hoodies □ | Earphones □ | On phone □ | Standing □ | Walking□ |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| TODDLERS | Pushchair □ | Crawling □ | Playing □ | Crying □ | Approaching □ |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| BABIES  | In a pram □ | In a stroller □ | Being held □ | Being fed □ | Other □ |
| OTHERS  |  |  |  |  |  |
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Add your own notes on this category e.g., other encounters, degree of difficulty, interesting points and places.

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| ANIMALS |  |  |  |  |  |
| DOGS | On Lead □  | Off lead □  | Ata a Distance □  | Close by □ | In a class □ |
|  | Large □ | Small □ | Black □ | White □ | Flat face □ |
|  | Panting □ | Laid Down □ | Playing □ | Running □ | Being carried □ |
|  | Barking □ | Male □ | Female □ | Fluffy □ | Shaggy □ |
|  | Older □ | Younger □ | Dressed □ | Other □ | Other □ |
| CATS | Still □ | Moving□ | Running □ | Quiet □ | Meowing □ |
|  | Eating □ | Kittens □ | □ Other □ | Other □ | Other □ |
| HORSES | In a Field □ | In a Stable □ | Being Ridden □ | Rider talking □ |  Being Led □ |
|  | Racing□ | Trotting □ | Riders mounting□ | Riders dismounting □ | Loading □ |
| FARM LIVESTOCK | Sheep □ | Cattle □ | Chickens □ | Ducks □ | Other □ |
|  | Goats □ | Pigs □ | Other □ | Other □ | Other □ |
| BIRDS | Through a window □ | In a garden □ | In a park □ | On a pond □ | Flying Over □ |
| OTHER ANIMALS | Rabbits □ | Llama □ |  |  |  |
|  | Pets □ |  |  |  |  |

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| HANDLING |  |  |  |  |  |
| PAWS  | Touched □  | Held □  | Dried □ | Examined □ | Washed & Dried □ |
| feet, nails, pads, hair | Nails clipped □  | Hair between pads trim □ | Front paws □ | Hind Paws □ | Gives Paws □ |
| EARS | Touched □  | Held □  | Examined □ | Cleaned □ | Groomed □ |
| Inner, outer, groom, treat | Smelled □ | Trimmed if necessary □ | Other □ | Other □ | Other □ |
| GROOMING | Back □ | Chest □ | Underside □ | Legs □ | feet □ |
| The puppy positions can be utilised here. | Leg feathering □ | Around back end □ | Towel dried □ | Being bathed□ | Hair dryer □ |
| EYES | Look into □ | Hold still □ | Accept hand approaching □ | Approach with dropper□ | other □ |
|  | Cleaned □ |  |  |  |  |
| MOUTH | Lips □ | Open mouth □ | Check teeth □ | Test CRT □ | Tongue □ |
| Capillary refill time CRT. | Throat □ | Palate □ | Accept fingers in □ | Teeth Brushed □ |  |
| TREATMENT | Being restrained □ | Being bandaged □ | Being held □ | Being fed □ | Other □ |
| WEARING | Collar □ | Harness □ | Lead □ | Muzzle □ | Coat □  |
|  | Other □ |  |  |  |  |
| GENERAL HANDLING | Handled all over □ | Handled by strangers □ |  |  |  |

Add notes on this category e.g., other encounters, degree of difficulty, interesting points and places.

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| ENVIRONMENTSINDOORS |  |  |  |  |  |
| HOUSES  | Your Own □ | Friends □ | Family □ | Upstairs □ | Floor surfaces □ |
|  | Household noises □ | Vacuum Cleaner □ | Washing Machine □ | Dryers □ | Dishwasher □ |
|  | Television □ | Radio □ | Neighbours □ | Fan □ | Deliveries □ |
|  | Doorbell □ | Telephone □ |  |  |  |
| SHOPS  | Pet Shop □  | Gift Shop □  | Post Office? □  | Bank? □ | Other □ |
| Seek out Shops that allow it | Go Outdoors □ | Other □ | Other □ | Other □ | Other □ |
| CAFÉ – SOME ARE SPECIALLY FOR DOGS | Dog Friendly □ | Allows □ | Outdoors □ | Indoors □ | Other □ |
| Write in the names to remind you | Other □ | Other □ | Other □ | Other □ | Other □ |
| SMALL SPACES | Bathroom □ | Bedroom □ | Office □ | Lift/elevator □ | Toilet □ |
|  | Vets □ | Waiting room □ | Other □ | Other □ | Other □ |
| FLOOR/GROUND SURFACES | Grass □ | Carpet □ | Tarmac □ | Concrete □ | Pebbles □ |
| Caution regarding temperature & slips | Slippery □ | Rubber □ | Sand □ | Bridges □ | Mud □ |
|  | Tiles □ | Wood □ | Wet □ | Puddles □ |  |
| GROOMERS & VETS | Waiting areas □ | On a table □ | Bath □ | Dryer □ | Clippers □  |
| Preparation will really take the stress out of the visit for your dog and the groomer or vet. | Brushes and combs □ | Other dogs in a cage □ | Nail Clippers □ | Being left □ | Being restrained □ |
| (See HANDLING above) | Being handled by others □ | Settle in a crate □ | Walk past other dogs □ | Being handled all over □ |  |

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| ENVIRONMENTSOUTDOORS |  |  |  |  |  |
| LARGE OPEN SPACES | Park □ | Beach □ | Fields □ | Dog Park □ | Rural Walk □ |
| Remembering where you should & should not go. | Moors □ | With water □ | With lots of public □ | Quiet □ | Other □ |
| FLOOR/GROUND SURFACES | Grass □ | Carpet □ | Tarmac □ | Concrete □ | Pebbles □ |
| Caution regarding temperature & slips | Slippery □ | Rubber □ | Sand □ | Bridges □ | Mud □ |
|  | Tiles □ | Board walk □ | Steps □ | Slopes □ |  |
| NOISES & SIGHTS | Market □ | Boot Sale □ | Football match □ | Near School □ | Town/City □ |
| Use gradual exposure techniques | Traffic □ | Music □ | Rubbish Truck □ | Lorries □ | Motorbikes □ |
|  | Birds □ | Honking horns □ | Sirens □ | Tractor □ | Cycles □ |
|  | Dropped Objects □ | Slamming doors □ | Crowds □ | Crow scarers □ | Shooting □ |
| CAR/VAN | Safe Entry □ | Safe Exit □ | Safe Travel □ | Parked on a road □ | Parked in a car park □ |
|  | Parked in a multistorey □ | Parked in a noisy area □ | Music □ | Talk on radio □ | Passengers in the car□ |
| OTHER TRANSPORT | Taxi □ | Bus □ | Train □ | Tube/Underground □ |  |
| Station areas | Rank □Ques □ | Station or Stop □ | Station□Crossing□ | Steps□Lift□corridors□ |  |

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