



ALL ABOUT DOG PARENTING

Puppy Training Checklist by Age

TICK AS
YOU GO

What to work on, stage by stage, from 8 weeks to 6+ months

8-12 WEEKS

Foundation Stage

HOUSE TRAINING

- ☐ Potty schedule after naps, meals, play
- ☐ Reward immediately outside
- ☐ No punishment for accidents

CRATE TRAINING

- ☐ Crate = happy place, not punishment
- ☐ Meals fed in or near crate
- ☐ Door open, free in-and-out access

COMMANDS (3-5)

- ☐ Name recognition
- ☐ Sit
- ☐ Come (happy voice, short distance)

SOCIALIZATION

- ☐ Handling: ears, paws, mouth
- ☐ New people, sounds, surfaces
- ☐ Car ride exposure

3-4 MONTHS

Building Stage

HOUSE TRAINING

- ☐ Accidents dropping off
- ☐ Consistent potty spot
- ☐ Bladder control improving

CRATE TRAINING

- ☐ Short alone-time stretches
- ☐ Calm entry and exit
- ☐ Comfortable with door closed

COMMANDS (3-5)

- ☐ Stay
- ☐ Down
- ☐ Loose leash walking (quiet areas)

SOCIALIZATION

- ☐ Puppy class
- ☐ Unfamiliar dogs, supervised
- ☐ New environments weekly

5-6 MONTHS

Expanding Stage

HOUSE TRAINING

- ☐ Mostly reliable indoors
- ☐ Supervised in new spaces

CRATE TRAINING

- ☐ Comfortable a few hours
- ☐ Used for car rides, travel

COMMANDS (3-5)

- ☐ Heel
- ☐ Wait at doors and curbs
- ☐ Drop it
- ☐ Polite greetings

SOCIALIZATION

- ☐ Calm behavior near distractions
- ☐ Steady through adolescent caution

6+ MONTHS

Reliability Stage

HOUSE TRAINING

- ☐ Fully reliable
- ☐ Occasional regressions are normal

CRATE TRAINING

- ☐ Settles without fuss
- ☐ Full-time safe space

COMMANDS (3-5)

- ☐ Reliable recall, real distractions
- ☐ Place / settle
- ☐ Advanced impulse control

SOCIALIZATION

- ☐ Continued new exposure
- ☐ Confidence-building through adolescence

Guidance cross-referenced with the AVSAB Position Statement on Puppy Socialization and AAHA Canine Life Stage Guidelines. General guidance only, not a substitute for professional training or veterinary advice.