

# Socializing Your Puppy to People

**Socialization means making positive associations with new people, animals, places and things. Use your puppy's favorite reinforcers like food and toys to teach them these are all good.**

Introduce your puppy in a quiet manner to a variety of people over many sessions. Reward your puppy for simply looking at people from a short distance by feeding a yummy treat. Keep the sessions limited to a few minutes, always ending on a good note—don't wait till puppy gets overtired or excited.

Gradually get closer to all sorts of people. Say "yes" and treat when your puppy sees people using umbrellas, wearing floppy hats, sporting sunglasses, walking with canes, running with headphones and more. Your puppy will learn that "new and different" usually means that a treat or toy appears.

Realize that your puppy's perspective is much different than yours. Lower to the ground and new to the world, your puppy may need to keep her distance at first. Over a number of sessions, gradually get closer to people. Have neighbors hand feed your new puppy. Ask people to squat down to pet puppy on the chest—it's way less scary than bending over and petting on the head.



**Feed for Looking**

Watch your puppy. When she is simply looking at a new person, calmly feed a small yummy treat or play a favorite game. Reward with the food or toy **after** your puppy has looked for a few seconds.



**Give Space**

Your puppy may need some space at first. Feed/play for looking and repeat several times. Gradually move closer based on your puppy's body language—only if she looks comfortable. Always let your puppy decide whether to greet a person rather than forcing a greeting.



**Keep it Short**

Socialization sessions should be brief—only a minute or two at a time. Short and sweet is the motto! Remember to shift calories out of your puppy's food bowl—use some of their daily ration of food for training.



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