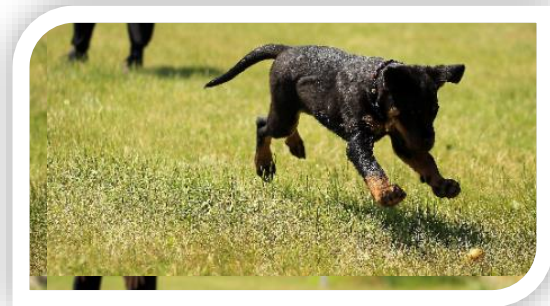


4 Easy Ways to Socialize your Dogs

1. Make sure to handle neonates
 - Very brief bouts (a few seconds) of gentle handling, such as picking up, stroking the puppy and immediately returning them to the whelping nest are a good start.
 - This quick examination also improves physical health by increasing early recognition of and interventions for pups that are sick, injured or underweight.
 - Exposing the puppies to human contact and handling from a young age will help to socialize them to their caretakers and other people.
2. Add items to the whelping pen, and create puppy playpens
 - Safe items that provide new sights, sounds, smells, and textures can easily be included
 - Add items that are likely to be encountered in a new home, such as carpet. Household items and toys that move and may make some sound can help set pups up for success.
 - Young pups also learn behaviors from mothers and littermates.
3. Create outdoor playpens
 - Outdoor playpens can expose the dogs to more of the sights, sounds, surfaces, and animals around them and their kennel area, further benefiting the socialization effort.
 - Consider including items such as steps, grass and larger toys in these areas.
4. Expose the puppies to new faces and people
 - This is a good way to combat stranger-based fear and aggression when they grow up. While not strangers to the breeder, extended family or close friends can serve as “strangers” because they are new to the dogs. Have visitors hand out small treats to dogs as they pass through the kennel.



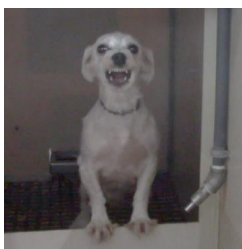
Green

Friendly approach
or undisturbed



Yellow

Ambivalent
posture/response



Red

Unfriendly/ fearful
response

- Even if a visitor is not available, breeders can appear to be “strangers” by quickly changing their appearance. Breeders can simply carry an umbrella, wear a large heavy coat, different hats and shoes, or walk with a pair of crutches to create new experiences for puppies and dogs.

Monitor each pup’s progress to identify those that need more efforts to ensure proper socialization. Puppies and older dogs can be evaluated using a red-yellow-green scoring system. Scores of yellow or red help breeders recognize and help fearful puppies. Early interventions are easier to implement, take less time, and are more effective. Good socialization practices set pups up for success by ensuring that they can adapt well to their environment as adults.