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## THE PUPPY'S RULE OF TWELVE

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**Make sure all experiences are safe and positive for the puppy. Each encounter should include treats and lots of praise, and your puppy should be able to leave whenever s/he wants. Slow down and add distance if your puppy is scared!**

### **By the time a puppy is 12 weeks old, it should have:**

(If your puppy is over 12 weeks start right away with this socialization guide.)

Experienced 12 different surfaces: wood, woodchips, carpet, tile, cement, linoleum, grass, wet grass, dirt, mud, puddles, deep pea gravel, grates, uneven surfaces, on a table, on a chair, etc.....

Played with 12 different objects: fuzzy toys, big & small balls, hard toys, funny sounding toys, wooden items, paper or cardboard items, milk jugs, metal items, car keys, etc.....

Experienced 12 different locations: front yard (daily), other people's homes, school yard, lake, pond, river, boat, basement, elevator, car, moving car, garage, laundry room, kennel, veterinarian hospital (stop by sometimes just to say hi & visit, lots of cookies, no vaccinations), grooming salon (just to say hi), etc....

Met and played with 12 new people (outside of family): include children, adults (mostly men), elderly adults, people in wheelchairs, walkers, people with canes, crutches, hats, sunglasses, etc....

Exposed to 12 different noises (ALWAYS keep positive and watch puppy's comfort level – we don't want the puppy scared): garage door opening, doorbell, children playing, babies screaming, big trucks, Harley motorcycles, skateboards, washing machine, shopping carts rolling, power boat, clapping, loud singing, pan dropping, horses neighing, vacuums, lawnmowers, birthday party, etc...

Exposed to 12 fast moving objects (don't allow to chase): skateboards, roller-skates, bicycles, motorcycles, cars, people running, cats running, scooters, vacuums, children running, children playing soccer, squirrels, cats, horses running, cows running, etc...

Experienced 12 different challenges: climb on, in, off and around a box, go through a cardboard tunnel, climb up and down steps, climb over obstacles, play hide & seek, go in and out a doorway with a step up or down, exposed to an electric sliding door, umbrella, balloons, walk on a wobbly table (plank of wood with a small rock underneath), jump over a broom, climb over a log, bathtub (and bath) etc....

Handled by owner (& family) 12 times a week: hold under arm (like a football), hold to chest, hold on floor near owner, hold in-between owner's legs, hold head, look in ears, mouth, in-between toes, hold and take temperature (ask veterinarian), hold like a baby, trim toe nails, hold in lap, etc...

Eaten from 12 different shaped containers: wobbly bowl, metal, cardboard box, paper, coffee cup, china, pie plate, plastic, frying pan, Kong, Treatball, Bustercube, spoon fed, paper bag, etc.....

Eaten in 12 different locations: back yard, front yard, crate, kitchen, basement, laundry room, bathroom, friend's house, car, school yard, bathtub, up high (on work bench), under umbrella, etc....

Played with 12 different puppies (or safe adult dogs) as much as possible. [This does NOT mean at the dog park.]

Left alone safely, away from family & other animals (5-45 minutes) 12 times a week.

Experienced a leash and collar 12 different times in 12 different locations.

Showing your puppy the positive side of life is useful, but what about the times when you want to tell your puppy no? For starters, you don't have to shout or scare the puppy. If you feel the need to punish your puppy, you can do so by saying (not shouting), "no" and leaving the room (social punishment). But you would be surprised at how effective it is to tell your puppy "yes!" instead. What I mean by that is to show your puppy what you do want him to do.

How do I do that? For example, to housebreak your puppy, show him where to eliminate and give him praise and a treat for going in the right spot. If you're sure he's about to go, you can say a cue first, like "be quick" or "go potty." It sure beats telling him, one square foot at a time, to not use your carpet as a toilet. If you ever catch him in the act, don't yell at him or rub his nose in it. Simply say, "No, Outside." Then take your puppy to the yard and praise him for being so clever when he pees outside. The "no" is disapproving, but your puppy should not fear for his safety. All that will get you is a puppy who goes behind the couch or out of sight to eliminate. People often tell me "She knows she's not supposed to go inside – she does it when I'm not looking!" But your puppy isn't thinking right or wrong, as in "I would be morally superior to pee outside, I just don't want to." She just knows it's not SAFE to eliminate in the house NEAR YOU. She also thinks you're a bit scary sometimes, and isn't sure why.