



STAGES OF DOG DEVELOPMENT

Do you know at what age your pup is able to hear? Is able to learn? When they refine their motor skills? Check out the stages of development below to find out!

NEONATAL: 0-14 DAYS

In this first stage of experience in the outside world these little pups:

- can respond to pain, temperature and hunger
- can crawl
- cannot conserve body temperature well
- sleep 90% of the time, only waking to feed
- Will heap together for warmth and spread apart if they need to cool down



TRANSITIONAL: 2-3 WEEKS

In the next stage of development some big changes happen such as:

- start to open their eyes
- start to open their ears
- can now stand and try to walk
- may be able to lap milk
- are able to start learning



SOCIALIZATION: 3-16 WEEKS

This is the biggest section because it has the most to cover! This is the period where you have the most impact on how your dog will react to things in life, puppies during this time:



- Develop sensory, perceptual and motor skills
- Are able to manipulate objects and play
- Start eliminating on their own with pre-elimination investigation
- Start to vocalize (howl and bark) and wag their tail
- Have a very high sensitivity to good and bad experiences
- Littermate interactions allow them to acquire social skills and bite inhibition

During this part of your puppy's life they are like little sponges, learning about what is safe and unsafe in the world. The best thing you can do for your puppy is build up as many positive associations as humanly possible. Take a look at our puppy socialization checklist to get an idea on what you should be exposing your puppy to. Also please refer to the AVSAB Position Statement on Puppy Socialization to learn more about vaccination status and socialization.

JUVENILE: 5 MONTHS - PUBERTY

In this stage of "teenage years" you can expect to see:

- more flight/fight behaviours
- the start of reproductive behaviours
- motor skill improvement
- a full set of adult teeth come in
- not able to reproduce



ADULT: PUBERTY ONWARD

Once the dog is in adult stage they are now able to reproduce, you see a full array of reproductive behaviours, they are able to refine how they communicate with other dogs or species, and they increase in size and strength (which is especially seen in large breed dogs)

