

CRITICAL PERIODS IN A DOG'S LIFE - DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

<p>0 to 7 Weeks Neonatal, Transition, Awareness, and Canine Socialization</p>	<p>Puppy is with mother and littermates. During this period, the puppy learns about social interaction, play, and inhibiting aggression* from mother and littermates.</p> <p>Puppies must stay with their mother and littermates during this critical period. Puppies learn the most important lesson in their lives--they learn to accept discipline.</p> <p>*Note: Some lines of dogs don't begin to get incisors until about 7 weeks, so this time period may last two additional weeks in those dogs--one can't learn to inhibit his bite if he has no teeth.</p>
<p>7 to 12 Weeks Human Socialization Period</p>	<p>The puppy now has the brain waves of an adult dog, but his attention span is short. This period is when the most rapid learning occurs.</p> <p>Learning at this age is permanent so this is a perfect time to start training.</p> <p>Also, this is the ideal time to introduce the puppy to things that will play an important part in his life. Introduce the puppy to different people, places, animals, and sounds in a positive, non-threatening way.</p>
<p>8 to 11 Weeks Fear Imprint Period</p>	<p>Avoid frightening the puppy during this period.</p> <p>Any traumatic, frightening or painful experience will have a more lasting effect on the puppy than if it occurred at any other time in its life. Avoid any elective surgery* at this time.</p> <p>We find that the fear period usually occurs in our dogs around 7-8 weeks.</p>
<p>13 to 16 Weeks Seniority Classification Period or The Age of Cutting</p>	<p>Puppy cuts teeth and apron strings! Puppy begins testing who is going to be a pack leader.</p> <p>You must discourage* any and all biting because such biting is a sign of dominance!</p> <p>It is important that you are a strong and consistent leader. Formal training must begin. Such training will help you establish your leadership. *Note: A quick pinch of the puppy's lip while staring him in the eye and hollering in his face works well in most puppies and divert the biting to a toy rather than human flesh/clothing.</p>
<p>4 to 8 Months Play Instinct Period Flight Instinct Period</p>	<p>The puppy may wander and ignore you. It is very important that you keep the puppy on a leash at this time! The way that you handle the puppy at this time determines if the puppy will come to you when called.</p> <p>At about 4-1/2 months, the puppy loses his milk teeth and gets his adult teeth.</p> <p>That's when the puppy begins serious chewing! A dog's teeth don't set in his jaw until between 6 and 10 months. During this time, the puppy has a physical need to exercise his mouth by chewing.</p>
<p>6 to 14 Months Second Fear Imprint Period or</p>	<p>Dog again shows fear of new situations and even familiar situations. Dog may be reluctant to approach someone or something new. It is important that you are patient and act very matter of fact in these situations.</p>

Fear of New Situations Period	<p>Never force the dog to face the situation.</p> <p>DO NOT pet the frightened puppy or talk in soothing tones.</p> <p>The puppy will interpret such responses as praise for being frightened. Training will help improve the dog's confidence.</p> <p>We suggest Neuter or spay the dog now.</p>
1 to 4 Years Maturity Period	You may encounter increased aggression and renewed testing for dominance. Continue to train your dog during this period.