

# PUPPY TRAINING CHECKLIST

First 16 Weeks Milestone Tracker



# How to Use This Checklist

This 80+ item checklist covers every milestone in the most important developmental window in your puppy's life (8-24 weeks). Print it, stick it on the fridge, and check off each item as your puppy hits it. Most owners are surprised by how many things they didn't know they needed to train — this checklist makes nothing fall through the cracks.

## 3 rules for using the checklist

- **Pace yourself.** 5-8 items per week is healthy. Don't rush — quality matters more than checkbox volume.
- **Solid before next.** A 'check' means the dog reliably performs the milestone in low-distraction environments. Not a one-time success.
- **Starred items are non-negotiable.** Items marked ★ must be solid by the indicated week. Skipping them creates adult problems that take months to fix.

### Want video demos for every milestone?

The Fast Dog Training program has step-by-step video for every checkbox in this checklist. Used by 50,000+ owners.

→ [See the Training Program](#)

# Weeks 1-4 (8-12 weeks old)

## Foundation Commands

- ★ Name recognition (looks at you when called)
- ★ Sit on cue
- Down on cue
- ★ Crate acceptance (enters willingly, calm inside)
- Bite inhibition started (mouthing reduced 50%)

## Potty Training

- ★ Outdoor schedule established (every 1.5 hours)
- ★ Crate-pee-free for 6+ hours overnight
- Indoor accidents under 3/week
- Signals to go out (whining, sitting by door)

## Handling & Socialization

- ★ Met 5+ friendly strangers (kids, adults, varied ages)
- ★ Met 3+ vaccinated calm dogs (NOT dog parks)
- Comfortable with paw handling (all 4 paws touched)
- Comfortable with mouth/teeth checked
- Walked on 3+ different surfaces (grass, gravel, tile)

# Weeks 5-8 (12-16 weeks old)

## Commands & Skills

- ★ Recall in low-distraction environments (Come)
- ★ Stay (5-second duration with you 3 feet away)
- Loose-leash walking introduced (drags leash inside)
- Leave it (can ignore food on closed fist)
- Drop it (releases toy on cue)
- Off (no jumping on people)

## Socialization (CRITICAL window)

- ★ Met 20+ people (varied appearances, situations)
- ★ Met 10+ calm dogs
- ★ Visited 5+ different environments
- Heard 5+ household sounds without panic
- Vet visit + grooming session (positive)
- Crate ride in car (calm, no panic)

## Bite Inhibition & Mouthing

- ★ Hard mouthing eliminated (no skin contact)
- Soft mouthing reduced (occasional only)
- Redirects to chew toys when offered

# Weeks 9-12 (16-20 weeks old)

## Reliability & Distraction Proofing

- ★ Sit reliable in 3+ environments (home, yard, sidewalk)
- ★ Down reliable across distractions
- ★ Recall reliable on long line (20-30 ft)
- Stay (30+ seconds with you across the room)
- Heel introduced (left side, eye contact)
- Place command (settles on mat 5+ minutes)

## Public Manners

- Calm during a 30-min restaurant patio visit
- Walks past distractions (other dogs, joggers) without lunging
- Greets strangers without jumping
- Settles in the car for 30+ minute drives

# Weeks 13-16 (20-24 weeks old)

## Adolescent Prep

- All Tier 1 commands (15+) reliable across distractions
- Sit-stay (1+ minute)
- Recall under moderate distractions (other dogs nearby)
- Heel for 3+ minutes off-leash in safe yard
- Comfortable alone in crate 4+ hours
- Public-place manners solid (cafe, store, friend's home)

## What's Next

If your puppy hits all the ★ items by their indicated weeks and 70%+ of the rest, you've built an exceptional foundation. Months 6-18 will test it (adolescence) but the foundation will hold. Months 18-24 will reveal the calm, reliable adult you've been training for.

### Get the complete training program

Step-by-step video demos for every milestone in this checklist, plus breed-specific guidance. Used by 50,000+ owners.

→ [See the Training Program](#)

→ [Click here to see the program](#)

*For 50 breed-specific training pages and more free PDFs, visit [dogtrainingbybreed.com](https://dogtrainingbybreed.com).*