



Critical Puppy Development Stages

Dogs develop through different social and behavioral phases throughout their first few months. Phases occur for all dogs in varying degrees and the strength of each phase depends largely on genetics, personality, upbringing, environment, and experiences.

Stage	Age	Solution
Socialization Period	Up to 16 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce your dog to new environments, other animals & people • Offer a treat or praise to pair new experiences with something your dog enjoys
Teething	3-6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a toy to redirect chewing and mouthy behaviors away from people or objects
Fear Phase	5-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to socialize your dog to new experiences and environments and offer treats and praise
Defiance Phase	9-15 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use basic commands and obedience to build and control a relationship with your dog
Second Fear Phase	15-20 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to socialize your dog to new experiences and environments and offer treats and praise
Mental Maturity	3-4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to socialize and train your dog to grow your relationship