



# 97 WAYS to Create Great Puppies!



*Avidog*  
Empowering, Inspiring and Encouraging  
Puppy Owners and Dog Breeders



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We are offering 97 Ways to Create Great Puppies! as a FREE ebook to help puppy owners and breeders make the most of the all-important first 16 weeks in the lives of their puppies. After years of breeding and raising our own puppies, and helping others raise theirs, we are confident that our science-based, puppy-rearing system can enable everyone to raise successful competition and working dogs, as well as wonderful family pets!

For additional copies of 97 Ways to Create Great Puppies! contact:

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## What's In This eBook?



**W**ithin these pages you will find a comprehensive listing of some of the things we, as breeders, do with our dams and puppies while they are in our care, as well as things we encourage our puppy buyers to do with their pups once they take their pups home. The ebook is broken up by four age groups: birth to three weeks, four to six weeks, seven to nine weeks, and the next seven weeks. We believe that introducing our pups to the things on this list at the right age has played an important role in our being able to breed so many successful working, performance and companion dogs. If you plan ahead and tackle this list at the appropriate ages, we are confident that you, too, will have great results!

Please Note: Some breeds develop more slowly than others. Differences in development can even be found among litters of the same breed. Please use common sense when using this list and adjust the time frames and challenges appropriately for your puppies!

We hope you enjoy our comprehensive list of ways to create great puppies!!





## The Sensitive Period For Puppies!



**T**he time in every puppy's life, from 3 to 16 weeks, is often referred to as "the sensitive period." The things that breeders and new puppy owners do, or do not do, are important and have the power to greatly influence the kind of dogs their puppies will become. During this time you literally have the ability to grow your pup's brain in size and complexity, making your pup smarter, healthier and more confident.

As a breeder you will have your pups during much of their sensitive period. Whether you sell your puppies to buyers who plan to do search and rescue, agility, tracking, service work, therapy work, hunting, herding or simply bring joy to a family, you can increase their success by integrating the list below into your puppy-rearing program and encouraging your puppy buyers to continue once they bring their pups home.





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If you are buying a pup, there is plenty here for you to do, too. First, ask your breeder to incorporate some of these things into her puppy rearing, if she is not already doing so. Then when you get your new puppy home, start on your list of things to do with your pup so you, too, can have a great dog!

We hope this list of the things we and our buyers do with our dams and puppies will help you on either your quest to find and create a terrific puppy for you and your family or to breed puppies that will grow up to be healthy, confident dogs that will enrich people's lives!





## Birth To Three Weeks



**B**e sure when you are handling the pups during these first weeks that you handle them gently. Pups at this age are fragile! Take the utmost care to support their bodies and not drop them at this stage!

1. Supplement your dam with Omega 3 fatty acids for increased trainability in her pups.
2. Give puppy kisses each day.
3. Supplement your dam with probiotics for stronger immune systems in her puppies.



4. Run your fingers down the puppies' tails from base to tip.
5. Keep mom's stress low to increase milk production and mothering.
6. Keep room temperature so the pups aren't crying and their mom wants to be with them.





**7.** On Days 3-16 do Avidog's Early Scent Stimulation. Let the pups smell a new object each day.

Here are some ideas:

- ❁ An orange peel, apple or banana
- ❁ Leaves, dirt, bark or wood
- ❁ A rabbit or very gentle cat
- ❁ Sheepskin or leather glove
- ❁ Metal, glass or wooden objects
- ❁ A duck wing, pheasant wing or pigeon
- ❁ Fresh evergreen, flowers or grass

Use your imagination. How many can you come up with?





8. Give pups a floor with good traction to build muscle and coordination while reducing future orthopedic problems.
9. Stack each puppy on the table twice a week.
10. Trim toenails every three days (until they go home) to reduce risk of mastitis and accustom the pups to this lifelong task.
11. On Days 3-16 perform Dr. Carmen Battaglia's Early Neurological Stimulation protocol on each puppy. Gently supporting the pup's body, perform these exercises for 3-5 seconds:
  - \* Hold the puppy with both hands perpendicular to the ground, so its head is directly above its tail.
  - \* Hold the puppy with both hands perpendicular to the ground, so its tail is directly above its head.





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- ❖ Hold the pup in both hands with its belly down so it is facing the floor.
  - ❖ Hold the pup with its back resting in the palm of both hands so it is facing the ceiling.
  - ❖ Hold the pup in one hand, while using a Q-Tip, gently tickle the puppy between its toes on one foot. Tickle a different paw each day.
  - ❖ Place puppy, belly down, onto a cold, textured surface. Do not restrain puppy from moving.
- 12.** Rotate new toys into the whelping box each day, such as:
- ❖ Large soft toys to crawl through
  - ❖ Large stuffed toys to lie on
  - ❖ Large, soft balls like beach balls
  - ❖ Once their ears are open add toys that make noise
- 13.** Stroke each pup's fur from tail to head and then head to tail.
- 14.** Click a clicker or say a word like "yes" each time mom gets in the whelping box to condition the pups to the marker.
- 15.** Move the puppies into their puppy pen. This is the time when you should start to housebreak your puppies. Doing so not only makes cleanup chores much easier while the pups are with you, but you will make your puppy buyers very happy. Across the board, our puppy buyers have thanked us for making housebreaking their puppies so easy. A lot of reward for limited effort!





**16.** Continue to take good care of the pups' mom!!

Over the next three weeks you should start adding different things to the puppy pen to stimulate a variety of senses. Here are some examples:

**17.** Safely secure the following things to the puppy pen:

- ❁ A mirror
- ❁ Balloons
- ❁ Pinwheels
- ❁ Lawn ornaments that move

As they get a little older add more things to the pen:

- ❁ Toys that wobble rather than roll
- ❁ Toys made of various substances (e.g. rope, fleece, sheepskin, rubber, latex, vinyl)





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- ❁ Balls that make noise and light up
  - ❁ A small wooden dumbbell
  - ❁ A small metal article
- 18.** Add new textures to walk on, in a small section of the puppy pen, such as:

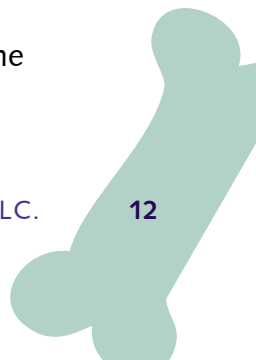
- ❁ A wire refrigerator shelf
- ❁ Pieces of slate
- ❁ A wooden board
- ❁ A jellyroll pan filled with large stones
- ❁ Ceramic tile
- ❁ Rubber matting
- ❁ Linoleum

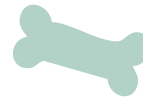


- 19.** Begin teaching the pups to come when you call at mealtimes.
- 20.** Introduce the pups to lots of sounds around the house at this point. You want sounds like the dishwasher, washing machine, television, pots clanking, kids playing to be everyday sounds that the pups won't even notice after a while!



- 21.** Introduce sounds you cannot create at home, such as those you would find at obedience and agility trials, hunt tests, fly-ball tournaments, construction sites, in big cities, etc. There are some great puppy habituation CDs on the market that replicate these sounds quite authentically.
- 22.** Put plastic water bottles in the puppy pen.





- 23.** Take the pups outside on the lawn. No walks yet, but let them smell the grass!
- 24.** During this time you should continue to handle each puppy's entire body from head to tail, including opening his mouth, looking into his eyes and his ears, like you are at the vet's office.
- 25.** Give the pups a bath.
- 26.** Trim the pups' toenails.
- 27.** Blow the pups dry with a blow dryer on warm (not too hot!)
- 28.** Start feeding the puppies solid food.
- 29.** Add wild fish oil and probiotic to the puppies' food.
- 30.** Introduce the pups to gentle cats and other friendly pets.



- 31.** Introduce the pups to at least one dog that isn't their mother. (If you don't know whether or not the dog is good with puppies, that dog should be outside the puppy pen.)
- 32.** Let the puppies get their feet wet.
- 33.** Add the bottle pool to the puppy pen—be prepared to be entertained!!!
- 34.** Toss treats into the pen during thunderstorms.





## Seven To Nine Weeks



**A**t this time in their lives you want to be introducing your pups to as many safe experiences as possible. Whether a pup spends its time outdoors or indoors, do your best to make change the norm.

- 35.** Continue with housebreaking!!!
- 36.** Coax the pups to walk/jump through a puppy tire.
- 37.** Start leash breaking.
- 38.** Take the pups on walks, preferably in the woods so they can climb on and over things. If the pups are still with their mother, take her along so they can follow her.
- 39.** Add crates to crawl on and into to the puppy pen.
- 40.** Introduce the pups to stairs.
- 41.** Take the pups for car rides.







- 42. If you have access to water, take the pups swimming.
- 43. Microchip your puppies.
- 44. Introduce the pups to edges.
- 45. Again, during this period you should continue to handle each puppy's entire body from head to tail, including opening her mouth, looking into her eyes and her ears, like you are at the vet's office.



- 46. When you take the pups to the veterinarian for their shots and health clearances be sure to make it a great experience for them!
- 47. Brush and/or comb out their coats on at least a weekly basis.
- 48. Start crate training.
- 49. Work on bite inhibition.

50. Continue to condition the pups' recalls.

51. Have a puppy party!! Our goal is for our puppies to meet at least 100 people by the time they leave our care at 8.5 weeks. We strive to introduce our pups to all sorts of people including men, women, kids and adults that are tall, short, skinny, heavy, bald, bearded, from many races. We also take opportunities to expose the pups to people in uniform, wearing hats, and coats and using canes, walkers and wheelchairs.





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- 52. Start leash walking.
- 53. Build a jungle gym in the puppy pen that will be filled with things for the pups to climb on, run through, crawl under, and play inside.
- 54. Oh, and did we mention, continue with housebreaking?
- 55. Teach the pups how to do puppy push-ups.
- 56. Introduce them to a play tunnel.
- 57. Dremel the pups' nails.



## The Next Seven Weeks (Weeks 10-16)



**W**henever you bring your pup home, you want to expose her to as many things as possible, paying special attention to include the things you expect she will be seeing throughout her lifetime. Be sure to do it in a safe manner. Remember you want your pup to have good experiences when exposing her to the things on this list (as well as any others you come up with!) Bad experiences will imprint just as quickly as good ones, so be careful to watch your pup's demeanor. A little stress is good for your pup, just be sure not to overdo it!

Here are some more ideas for you and your pup!



- 58.** Introduce your pup to appliances in your own home like the washing machine, dryer, vacuum cleaner, and dishwasher.
- 59.** Ask people you meet while out and about with your pup to give him some treats.
- 60.** If you go to a store that has a shopping cart, be sure your pup is given a chance to walk up to it both standing still and moving. You could even put her into the shopping cart if she is relaxed enough!
- 61.** Take your pup for a walk on trash day and walk him by the trash cans and bags.







62. On your walks be sure to let her walk by fire hydrants and the storm drains in the street.
63. Introduce your pup to people wearing costumes.
64. If you get your pup during the winter, be sure he gets a chance to play in the snow! But beware of the attack of the snowballs! If this happens, you will be very happy if your pup has already been introduced to number 27—a blow dryer!
65. Speaking of things that blow air, when landscapers are working in your area, be sure to walk your pup across the street from where they are blowing leaves or mowing the lawn.
66. Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall, if you live near the beach, be sure to take your pup for a romp in the sand and let him chase the waves and the seagulls!
67. Of course, taking her all these places means she is spending lots of time in the car! Be sure she is secured safely in a crate or seatbelt!





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- 68.** Play lots of tug games with your puppy and be sure to let him win some of the time.
- 69.** If it is summertime and you own a boat, be sure to take her for a ride!
- 70.** While you are at the beach, if there happen to be some people surfing, walk down so you both can watch!
- 71.** Enroll your puppy in a puppy playgroup or arrange get-togethers with other puppies and safe adult dogs.

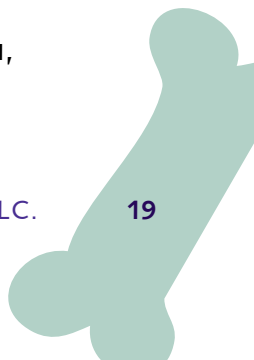


- 72.** If you will ever be going to a big city, take your pup there while he is young so he can soak up the sights and sounds. Why not add in a train or cab ride?
- 73.** Like to go camping? Take your pup with you!
- 74.** Find a place where you can hike in the woods with your pup. Let her climb over logs, wooden bridges, carry sticks, play in the leaves and the mud (yes, mud!)



- 75.** It's time to give your pup another bath!
- 76.** Play hide and seek both in the house and when hiking in the woods. See if your pup can find you!

- 77.** Add restraint to your pup's recalls at home. Have a friend hold your puppy back while you run away. When you call your puppy, as he pulls toward you, the person holding him should let go.





- 78.** Take your puppy for leash walks both during the day and at night. Things will look very different to your puppy at night.
- 79.** Take your pup to visit Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny! Even if you don't have kids, you should strive to have your puppy really comfortable around children. Do not just take advantage of opportunities to be around kids, seek them out. Ask kids to give your pup treats—and make sure they are her absolute favorites! When they are petting your pup, you can be giving her treats, too.



- 80.** Take your pup to the bus stop.
- 81.** Go to the park or an outdoor school event to see if you can find a family with young kids—if they have balloons or have a child in a stroller, all the better!

- 82.** Look for places where there are kids playing, like a playground! Let your pup watch the kids run and scream as they chase each other, swing on the swings and climb on the playground equipment. If they ask if they can pet him, tell them how to pet your puppy and give them treats to feed him.



- 83.** If you do not have kids, ask your friends if your puppy can come visit their children or grandchildren.
- 84.** To meet all sorts of people, take your pup with you when you pick someone up at the train station or the airport. So that it is not just a car ride, be sure to give yourself enough time to let her greet people!







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- 85.** Let your pup watch and listen to someone playing a musical instrument.
- 86.** During 4th of July if there are fireworks off in the distance, take your pup out to watch them. Remember to bring great treats, too!!!
- 87.** Take your pup to a construction site so she can see and hear the crane, bulldozer, jack hammers, power saws, nail guns, etc.
- 88.** If you plan to travel a lot with your pup, spend a night in a motel with her, even if you are not going on a trip or to a dog show.



- 89.** If you plan to compete in dog sports, be sure to get your puppy into the show environment, even if you are not entered.
- 90.** Ask your veterinarian if you can bring your pup by without an appointment to get her weight. If she gets lots of treats, the vet's office will soon become one of her favorite places!
- 91.** When you are out for a drive, take your pup through the car wash and get the bonus of a clean car.

- 92.** If you can find one, enroll him in a puppy socialization class where the pups work with you and also spend time playing with other pups.
- 93.** If you can fit in another class, try an obedience or foundation agility class.





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- 94. Teach your pup a new trick each week. It is not about the trick, it is about teaching her how to learn!
- 95. Take your pup to all your kids' sporting events!
- 96. Some things bear repeating—you and your veterinarian will be very happy if every day you handle your pup's entire body from head to tail—feet, legs, tail, belly, family jewels, open his mouth, look at his teeth, open and look into his eyes and ears!



Last but not least...

- 97. Have your puppy stay overnight at a friend's house.

## CONGRATULATIONS!!

“You have not only survived your puppy's first 16 weeks, you have taken advantage of the Sensitive Period, the most important time in your pup's life!! If you added to our list with your own ideas, we would love to hear about them. Drop us a note at [97Ways@Avidog.com](mailto:97Ways@Avidog.com).



# The Avidog® Puppy-Rearing Program



**H**OW each of these things are introduced to the pups is extremely important. Each puppy needs to not only experience them, but also be allowed to safely explore and learn from their adventures in a way that will be: nurturing, slightly stressful, positive, fun and will build their confidence. Breeders, do what you



can and then share these ideas with your puppy buyers. Are you thinking of getting a new pup? Share these ideas with your breeder. Did you just get a pup? Then you can start today. The more good experiences puppies have in their first four months of life the better chance they have of becoming healthy, stable dogs!

## The Avidog® Team

Gayle Watkins, Lise Pratt and Marcy Burke have collectively been breeding, training and competing with dogs for over 50 years. The Avidog® team has taught many breeders and thousands of new puppy owners how to use our scientifically-supported courses and products to raise wonderful puppies. Whether you are expecting a litter or getting a new puppy, check out our products designed to help you raise healthy, stable dogs!

If you prefer working privately, we also offer individualized Coaching Programs designed to help performance and working dog breeders, as well as new puppy owners, bring out the very best in their puppies. Whether you are raising a litter or a young puppy, we have something for you!

Stop by for a visit at [www.Avidog.com](http://www.Avidog.com).

