

## THE FIVE CRITICAL PERIODS

Period	Days	Basic Needs	Mental Capacity	Trainability	Special Notes
1	0-20 days	Warmth Food Sleep Mother	Nearly Zero	None	Little or no handling by humans.
2	4th week (21-28 days)	Warmth Food Sleep Mother	All senses functioning  Awareness of living begins	Slight	Extreme critical period—Do not remove from littermates or mother. Introduction to human society should be instituted but carefully controlled.
3	5th through 7th weeks (29-49 days)	Canine socialization within litter  Socialization with human society	Capable of responding to voices  Ability to recognize people	Developing	Awareness of difference between human and canine societies.
4	8th through 12th weeks (50-84 days)	Remove from littermates & mother influence  Supervised human socialization  Love-Security  Supervised play with children  Requires new mother image for security	Brainwaves can be recorded  Ability to establish permanent bond and man-dog relationship  Ability to establish confidence  Capable of accepting gentle discipline	Ability to learn respect  Capable of learning simple behavioral responses Come-Sit-Stay-No  Begin house-breaking  Begin fetch games  Learning by association	Children and other animals should not be allowed to scare or hurt puppy—either maliciously or inadvertently—Introduction to other humans is very important now but must be closely supervised to minimize adverse conditioning. Expose to loud noises gradually; i.e. autos, vacuum, washing machine.
5	13th through 16th weeks (85-112 days)	Love Attention Discipline Socialization Security	Fully developed needing only experience  Will attempt to establish self as dominant being  Mind still being influenced	Capable of undergoing formal obedience training  Capable of adopting a positive or negative attitude toward training	Obedience trainers should be selected with great care—Puppy's mind still being influenced. Praise for correct behavioral response is most effective training tool. Meaningful praise highly important to shape positive attitudes.