



AUSSIE ANGELS ASSISTANCE D❤️GS

With paws we serve!

When it comes to training an Assistance Dog, absolutely nothing is more important than *exhaustive socialization*. Socialization and exposure to the world is the foundation upon which all other training rests, and a Assistance Dog who hasn't gained real-world experience via systematic socialization is not fit for public access. With this list of often-missed opportunities, you'll be able to ensure you're hitting all the bases while socializing Assistance Dogs in Training.



Important Considerations Before Beginning

Before bringing your Assistant Dog in Training (ADiT) home, you need to have a defined plan for socializing him. While many people decide to simply take the puppy with them and introduce him to everything and anything they can, utilizing that approach results in missed experiences and an uneven education.

Unfortunately, more Assistance Dogs are released from training programs across the country for socialization concerns than any other reason. Protect your partnership by not only picking a puppy from a source that began socialization and stimulation at birth, but by also continuing socialization, exposure and training throughout your puppy's training.

Use the attached checklist or prepare one of your own that includes everything your partner may encounter as both a puppy in training and as a working Assistance Dog adult. By keeping track of your Assistance Dog in Training's education, you'll better be able to spot and fill in holes before they become an issue.

The most important rule of socializing Assistance Dog's in Training is to never, ever, ever, for any reason, force an ADiT to approach, interact with, touch or be on/near/with something that appears to frighten them.

Forcing a puppy in training to engage when afraid ensures he'll never form positive associations with the object, person, place, surface, equipment or situation. Instead of forcing your ADiT, always keep high-value treats with you and use them to encourage a suspicious puppy to explore a situation of his own accord. If you lay a solid foundation of socialization that rewards a puppy in new situations, you'll create a confident learner who thoroughly enjoys circumstances he's never encountered.

Finally, your Assistance Dog in Training needs to encounter a situation more than once before you can ensure he'll always be comfortable with it. Most professional working dog trainers recommend at least 3 instances of positive exposure. Always remember the ultimate goal of socialization: to create a well-rounded, unshakeable, stable, solid, confident Assistance Dog in all situations.

Why Items Were Included in the List

This list is the brainchild of several Assistance / Service Dog and Working Dog trainers. Trainers were asked to think back over their experiences, consult with their puppy raisers and teams in the field, and consider what they do differently now that they didn't in the beginning of their programs concerning socialization.

Those answers were integrated into this list in the hopes that some of the holes even professional trainers have had in the past could be avoided by puppy raisers and trainers in the future. If you have any further questions concerning an item on the list, don't hesitate to [AAAD](#)

Surfaces

- Dirt
- Grass
- Gravel, Loose and Packed
- Sand
- Tile
- Concrete
- Granite/Marble
- Slippery Surfaces
- Puddles/Water/Fountains
- Carpet
- Metal
- Grates (where the dog can see through and may be fearful of falling)

Animals

- Small animals
- Birds
- Cats
- Farm animals
- Cows
- Horses

- Reptiles
- Massive dogs
- Large dogs
- Little dogs

Equipment

- Collar
- Leash
- Crate (Wire, Metal, Plastic)
- Harness
- Vest
- Boots
- Cooling Coat
- Sweater
- Head Halter
- Basket Muzzle

Smells

- Pizza
- BBQ/Grilling
- Food Courts
- Exhaust (Bus/Truck/Car)
- Gas Fumes
- Paint
- Rubbing Alcohol

- Dog Food Besides Your Own
- Something Rotting
- Scents Commonly Encountered at Job

Things

- Bouncy Houses/Blow-Up Displays
- Full-Wall Mirrors
- Nerf/Water Guns
- Vacuum
- Stairs
- Balloons
- Umbrellas
- Hula Hoops
- PT/Gym Equipment
- Soda/Vending Machine (money in, heavy thing falling)

People

- Babies
- Toddlers
- Pre-Teens
- Teens
- Young Adults
- Men of All Sizes
- Women of All Sizes
- People of all Races

- People Wearing Hats/Coats/Hoodies
- Police Officers
- EMTs
- Firemen
- People With Odd Gait
- People in Wheelchair
- People with Medical Equipment
- People with Varying Disabilities
- People of Varying Ages
- People with Varying Hair Lengths
- People with Head Scarfs/Face Covering
- People in Costumes

Events

- Sporting Events
- Birthday Parties
- Holiday Celebrations
- Church Get-Togethers
- School Events
- Seminars
- Street Fairs
- County Fairs/Rodeo
- Grooming
- Physical Exams
- Car Rides

Places

- Dog Shows
- Vet Office
- Zoo
- Bowling Alley
- Skating Rink
- Movie Theater
- Farms
- Woods
- Boats
- Buses

Sounds

- Thunder
- Fireworks
- Gun Shots
- Barking Dogs
- Diesel Engines
- Music
- Burning Wood
- Crying Babies
- Engines Starting
- Hunting Calls
- Banging on Pots/Pans



Final Considerations

Concerning sounds, it can be difficult to find safe situations to take your ADiT to for socialization. Pre-recorded sound effects are good option to provide the best, safest, and easiest route to ensure your Assistance Dog in Training develops a thick skin regarding all types of noise.

You can find noise desensitization CDs for dog shows, agility trial, and performance events, for babies, city sounds, natural sounds and hunting sounds, for thunder, storms, rain and fireworks, and pretty much anything else you could hope to expose your working dog or future Assistance Dog to. [Clean Run](#) provides sound socialization CDs, as does [Through a Dog's Ear](#). For downloading to your computer or MP3 player, online sound effect libraries like [Sounddogs](#) allow you to download files individually these can work out quite expensive

AAAD will be sending you a copy of Sounds for Hounds CD before puppy arrives.

