

Heart of a Border Collie Rescue's Top Recommendations for Puppies

Obedience Classes are required for puppies adopted through HOABCR. We can provide suggestions on great training facilities in your area if you'd like- just ask! Pick a school that feels comfortable to you and focuses on positive reinforcement (most do, these days). Please remember to honor the terms of your contract and send proof of enrollment in classes as indicated there.

First Vet Visit is required within 10 days of adoption. Make this a happy experience by taking some great treats along for the visit. Talk with your vet about when your puppy is safe to meet other dogs and be out in public. *Our socialization suggestions below assume he or she is cleared to meet other dogs.*

Socialization!!! Properly socializing your puppy is critical to his/her long-term well-being, and involves much more than meeting other dogs. Expose your puppies to many new experiences, and they will find the world a fun and exciting place instead of scary or intimidating. Be liberal with treats whenever you're trying something new!! Some of our favorites:

1. Download "**Pupstanding**" from the App Store or Google Play. We cannot recommend this app enough – it provides checklists of different sights, sounds, surfaces, People & Handling that puppies should be safely exposed to. "How-To" tips and a tracking system make this easy to use and PHENOMENAL!!!
2. Visit your **vet clinic** with no appointment. Get them on the scale, let them sniff around and meet the staff. Dispense tons of treats!! Most clinics LOVE to meet puppies, and this will help them feel comfortable for a real appointment.
3. Visit dog-friendly **retailers** (call ahead to confirm they are dog friendly).
 - a. **Home Depot** stores have lots of men, who can be scary to puppies in particular (deep voices, taller, facial hair...). Visit the construction material area & watch big fans and forklifts driving around making lots of noise.
 - b. Garden centers are fun to walk around and smell, but make sure to give the dog potty breaks so he/she doesn't leave a calling card on any merchandise.
 - c. Many **Cabella's** stores are dog friendly; lots to see (taxidermy)
 - d. Pet supply stores- **Chuck and Don's** and **Bentley's** are favorites of HOABCR

- e. **Scheels** stores are typically dog friendly!
4. Go to a **park** with kids playing and just watch them on the swings and running around. Outdoor waterparks at community parks are excellent in the summer with lots of activity, or sledding hills in winter.
 5. Check out a neighborhood **sporting event** - hang back and watch all the activity, safely meet some other dogs and kids!
 6. Visit a **construction site** and watch at a safe distance. All those big machines and loud noises can be scary. Be calm and reassuring, and use those treats!
 7. Meet different **people**. Not everyone needs to give your dog a treat, but make sure puppy isn't rewarded for jumping up/on people, only for keeping all 4 feet on the ground.
 8. **Dog Parks** should be used very carefully if at all. We do not recommend dog parks in general, but especially NOT for puppies. Reading this article will help explain more: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/06/smarter-living/the-dog-park-is-bad-actually.html>

Overall, go slow. Never force the puppy into an uncomfortable situation. Safety is key – a scared puppy may bolt away from you. If your puppy is afraid, whimpers, or cowers, respect what they are telling you. Simply walk away from whatever scared them and reassure them calmly. Any look back in the direction of what scared the puppy should be rewarded (ie: if a loud truck scared them, step back 20 ft. If the puppy even peeks toward the truck, they get a “good girl!” and a treat for trying to be brave.)

Contact us anytime! We love to stay in touch with our adopters and welcome any questions you run into.

Good luck, and most importantly, enjoy your new puppy and THANK YOU for choosing rescue!