



# how can I socialize my dog **DURING COVID-19?**

**Even while observing social distancing, it's important to prepare dogs to enjoy new and different experiences, people, and other animals.**

Whether a dog is young or old, new to the household or a seasoned family pet, socialization – preparing it to enjoy interactions and be comfortable with other animals, people, places, and activities – is an important part of responsible pet ownership.

## **Go for a walk**

This provides opportunities for socialization and exposure to new things. Be sure to maintain at least 6 feet of separation between yourself and others, including other dogs.

## **Go for a car ride**

Get your pet used to traveling in a car.

## **Prepare for veterinary visits**

Get your dog used to different types of handling, such as playing with their paws, tail, or ears. This will help get them ready for nail trims, thermometers, medication, and other exam activities.

## **Let dogs explore indoors**

Allow them to inspect a variety of toys or common home objects. Be sure to supervise them so no injuries, chewing, or ingestion occur.

## **Work with the crate**

Acclimate your dog to their carrier or crate. The first step of crate training is helping your pet recognize it as their safe space.

## **Maintain routine**

Keeping a schedule similar to your usual routine will help when we transition back to non-COVID-19 life.

If you notice concerning changes in your pet's behavior, reach out to your veterinarian for a consultation. It could be a behavioral issue related to changes in your family's lifestyle, or it could signal an underlying medical condition.

[avma.org/Socialization](https://avma.org/Socialization)