

WHAT TO EXPECT IN YOUR

CAVAPOO'S FIRST 12 MONTHS

A Comprehensive Professional Education Guide

From

CASA GRANDE RESERVE

Premium Cavapoo Puppies • Casa Grande, Arizona

Health • Education • Lifetime Support



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Welcome & How to Use This Guide

This concise professional guide is your complete reference for raising a confident, healthy, and well-adjusted Cavapoo from 8 weeks to their first birthday. It combines clear developmental explanations, actionable techniques, real-world troubleshooting, and professional illustrations drawn from our breeding experience.

Each section delivers: clear explanations of what's happening developmentally • practical steps you can implement immediately • Pro Tips from our experience • common mistakes to avoid • visual illustrations for key techniques.

We provide lifetime support. Use this as your foundation and reach out anytime with questions. Consistency and positive experiences in the first year set the stage for a lifetime of good behavior and strong bonding.

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Final Notes & Lifetime Support

Section 1: 8–12 Weeks – The Critical Foundation Period

This is one of the most important developmental windows in your puppy's life. What happens between 8 and 16 weeks has a lasting impact on confidence, trainability, emotional regulation, and how your Cavapoo interacts with the world as an adult.

What's Happening Developmentally

Your puppy is in a sensitive period for socialization and learning. Their brain is highly receptive to new experiences. Positive, well-managed exposure during this time helps prevent fear-based behaviors, reactivity, and anxiety later in life.

Key Characteristics at This Age

- Very small and fragile (usually 2–5 lbs at 8 weeks)
- High sleep requirement (18–20 hours per day)
- Extremely limited bladder and bowel control
- Strong need for closeness and security
- Rapid learning — every interaction teaches them something

The Socialization Window (8–16 Weeks)

The goal is to create calm, positive associations with people, surfaces, sounds, handling, and environments. Keep all new experiences short and positive. If your puppy shows signs of stress (tail tucked, lip licking, yawning, trying to escape), calmly remove them and try again later with lower intensity. **Never force them through scary situations.**

◆ PRO TIP

Keep new experiences short and positive. Watch for stress signals and back off if needed. Never force scary situations — this builds confidence instead of fear.

Crate Training – Building a Safe Space

A crate should be a safe, comfortable den — never punishment. Introduce it gradually with meals and high-value treats inside. The goal is for your puppy to voluntarily choose to go into the crate.

◆ **PRO TIP**

Many Cavapoos are prone to separation anxiety. Start with very short departures (30–60 seconds) while calm. Gradually build duration. Never make a big deal when leaving or returning.

Common Mistake to Avoid: Leaving a young puppy in the crate too long. At 8–12 weeks, they can usually only hold their bladder for 2–3 hours maximum during the day.

Potty Training Foundations

Consistency and timing are everything. Take your puppy out every 1–2 hours, after every meal, after naps, and after play. Use the same door and same potty spot each time. Praise enthusiastically when they go in the right place.

◆ **PRO TIP**

If you catch your puppy starting to go inside, calmly say “outside” and take them out immediately. Never punish after the fact — it only creates fear and can make potty training take much longer.



Nail Trimming Technique

Start nail trimming early so your puppy gets used to it. Hold your puppy calmly and trim small amounts from the tip of the nail, avoiding the quick (the pink part inside the nail).

◆ **PRO TIP**

If you accidentally nick the quick, apply styptic powder or cornstarch to stop the bleeding. Give your puppy lots of praise and treats afterward.



Section 2: Crate Training & Management (Deep Dive)

A crate is one of the most valuable tools you can use in the first year — when introduced correctly. It is not a jail. It should become your puppy's safe, comfortable den.

Why Crate Training Matters

- Prevents destructive chewing and potty accidents when unsupervised
- Helps with potty training by teaching bladder control
- Gives your puppy a calm space during overstimulation
- Makes travel and vet visits much easier
- Reduces risk of separation anxiety when used properly

How to Introduce the Crate Correctly

- Place the crate in a central but quiet area.
- Make it comfortable with soft bedding.
- Feed meals inside the crate with the door open.
- Toss high-value treats inside throughout the day.
- Start closing the door for very short periods while you're right there.
- Never use the crate as punishment.

◆ PRO TIP

Many Cavapoos are prone to separation anxiety. Start with very short departures (30–60 seconds) while your puppy is calm. Gradually build duration. Never make a big deal when leaving or returning.



Section 3: Early Handling & Desensitization

One of the most valuable things you can do in the first 12 weeks is get your puppy comfortable with being handled all over their body. This makes grooming, vet visits, and daily care much easier for life.

Key Areas to Desensitize

- Paws and nails (for trimming)
- Ears (for cleaning and checking)
- Mouth and teeth (for dental care)
- Face and eyes
- Body and tail
- Being picked up and held in different positions

◆ PRO TIP

Do a little bit of handling every single day. Consistency matters more than long sessions. By 12 weeks, your puppy should be comfortable with most handling if done correctly.

Section 4: Sleep, Crying & Settling In

Puppies this age need a lot of sleep. Overtired puppies become difficult to manage — they bite more, have a harder time settling, and can become hyperactive or whiny.

Normal Sleep Patterns

- 18–20 hours per day is normal at 8–12 weeks
- They will have short bursts of high energy followed by needing to crash
- Nighttime crying is very common in the first 1–2 weeks

◆ **PRO TIP**

Many new owners accidentally create bad habits by giving too much attention when the puppy cries at night. Keep nighttime potty trips calm and boring. Respond briefly, then return them to the crate.

Section 5: 3–6 Months – The Toddler Phase

This stage is often when new owners feel the biggest shift. Your puppy has more energy, is testing boundaries, and is going through important developmental changes.

Teething & Chewing Management

Teething is one of the most challenging parts of this stage. Your puppy will chew on anything to relieve gum discomfort. Provide appropriate chew toys and redirect.

◆ **PRO TIP**

If your puppy is chewing excessively even with appropriate toys, they may be overtired or under-stimulated. Increase structured play, training, and enrichment, and make sure they are getting enough sleep.

Fear Periods (Especially 4–5 Months)

Many puppies go through a noticeable fear period around 4–5 months. Things they previously ignored may suddenly become scary. This is normal developmental regression.

◆ **PRO TIP**

Stay calm and upbeat. Use high-value treats and play to create positive associations. Never force your puppy to confront something they're afraid of. Let them approach at their own pace.

Section 6: 6–9 Months – The Adolescent Phase

This is often the most challenging stage for new owners. Your Cavapoo is going through hormonal changes, testing boundaries more strongly, and sometimes appearing to “forget” everything they've learned.

The “Teenage” Regression

It is very common for puppies who were doing well with training to suddenly seem stubborn or unresponsive between 6 and 9 months. This is normal. Their brain is going through major changes.

◆ **PRO TIP**

Many owners make the mistake of relaxing rules during this stage. This often leads to long-term behavior problems. Stay consistent now, even when it feels like you're going backward.

Common Adolescent Issues

- Marking or indoor accidents (especially males)
- Increased reactivity or barking
- Humping (often a sign of over-arousal)
- Difficulty settling and impulse control challenges

Section 7: 9–12 Months – The Young Adult Phase

By this stage, your Cavapoo is approaching physical maturity and beginning to settle into their adult personality. While they are still young and will continue developing until 18–24 months, many of the most intense adolescent behaviors start to ease.

Solidifying Training & Habits

This is a critical time to reinforce the behaviors you want long-term. What you allow or don't allow now becomes much harder to change later.

◆ **PRO TIP**

Continue being consistent through at least 18 months. Dogs that have consistent rules and training in the first year tend to be more confident and better behaved as adults.

Health at One Year

Around the 1-year mark, most dogs transition to an annual wellness schedule. Discuss heartworm prevention, flea/tick prevention, and spay/neuter timing with your veterinarian based on your dog's specific needs and lifestyle.

You Are Not Alone

Raising a Cavapoo is deeply rewarding but also requires knowledge, patience, and consistency. This guide gives you the foundation. We at Casa Grande Reserve are here to support you through every stage of your dog's life — training, health, behavior, nutrition, or anything else. We truly mean lifetime support.

Thank you for choosing Casa Grande Reserve. Here's to healthy, happy dogs and the families who love them.

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