

Sight Development in the Dog & Puppy

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All puppies are born with their eyelids closed. They remain closed until the newborn puppy reaches 10-14 days of age. At this time, the lids open exposing the still immature eyeball. The eyeball at 14 days of age is bluish to gray in color. The iris, or colored portion of the eyeball, gives the eye this bluish appearance. Additionally, the cornea may appear hazy or not transparent. The iris will take on the adult coloration usually by eight weeks of age and oftentimes sooner. The cornea will normally become clear by eight weeks of age also. Most puppies will have adequate vision by eight weeks of age, and it will gradually improve reaching adult capacity over the next several weeks.

Visual evaluation can be assessed by silently tossing cotton balls into the air and observing the puppy's visual response. The normal puppy should follow the hand motion then watch the cotton ball as it moves through the air and falls to the floor. It is important to make no sound as the puppy may respond to the noise and not his visual stimuli.

