

Patch

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Holiday Puppies - Wolf's Lair K9 Offers Don'ts and Do's of a Holiday Puppy

With the holiday's right around corner people are scrambling to get everyone on their list the perfect present and some small children find this time of year as an opportunity to ask for a puppy. Adding a puppy to your family over the holidays may sound appealing but nobody thinks about all the hard work and effort that must be dedicated to this living, breathing family member for the next 10+ years until after all the excitement dies and reality sets in. The team at Northbrook-based Wolf's Lair K9 wants share a few do's and don'ts of holiday puppies in case you're thinking of getting one this year!

Don'ts

- Fall in love with the first puppy you see and make a rash impulse purchase solely based on physical appearances
- Surprise someone with an animal that is not willing or able to care for it for the duration of its life
- Wait to start training with your puppy. The sooner you start the better behaved your puppy will be through adulthood
- Slack on potty training because its winter and you don't want to go outside just because it's cold! One of the worst mistakes one could make is relying on puppy "pads" in the house instead of teaching the pup to only go potty outside. This is a very difficult behavior to re-teach a dog once the winter months have passed.
- Be fooled by a "nice" looking breeder's website or an ad for free puppies in the paper that sounds too good to be true. Just remember that nothing is free is life and if someone is giving a puppy away it is possible that something is wrong with which will lead to future heartaches.

Do's

- Research breeds so that you decide on a breed that suits your life style. Remember that even if the pup is a rescue mix that you must research each breed separately as the puppy will carry traits from each breed.
- Set a schedule/structure right away for things such as feeding, going potty, training, sleeping and going for walks as well. Dogs will thrive from living in an environment that is structured.
- Consider adopting a puppy from a local shelter that has a reputable history instead of purchasing from a pet store who sometimes sell poorly bred puppy mills dogs!
- Make sure to have the house “puppy proofed” and acquire all the supplies that you might need prior or actually bringing the puppy home. Better to be over prepared for then under prepared for the big day.
- Researching the right professional dog trainer is almost as important as researching breeds. Be sure to review their website, resume/credentials, look for videos, reviews/testimonials and be sure to call them directly to talk to them all your questions and concerns prior to actually having the puppy at home.

Wolf's Lair K9 offers specialized training options, including everything from simple everyday obedience for the home such as unwanted jumping or anxiety related issues, to proper leash management, the fundamentals of aggression management to advanced canine obedience for competition sports. For more information, please go to www.wolfslairK9.com, or call 847.280.1532.