



Grafton Dog Obedience Club Inc.

DOUBLE TROUBLE OR TWICE THE FUN?

So you think it might be a good idea to have two dogs instead of just one? True, dogs need companionship and a second dog can be an excellent idea especially if your dog is often left alone. But before taking on a second dog – think carefully!

Should you get two puppies (litter mates maybe)? One puppy and one older dog? Two older dogs? Two males? Two females? Or one of each?

Two puppies are much, MUCH more work than a single puppy (trust me on that one!). Remember “two heads are better than one” and you can be sure that whatever mischief one puppy doesn’t think up, the other will. They will then combine forces to carry out that mischief on a grand scale. Years ago I sold a puppy to an elderly lady who ended up caring for another young dog a few months later. She woke up one morning to find her lounge, yes that’s right, her LOUNGE, had been dragged halfway out the door into her yard. Fortunately she had an excellent sense of humour! If you take on two puppies, you would be wise to puppy-proof your house, yard and belongings and maybe confine the puppies to a safe area when they aren’t being supervised.

If the puppies are littermates, remember that old saying “blood is thicker than water”. Littermates often have very strong bonds and you will need to work hard to establish a stronger bond between yourself and each dog if you are to be their pack leader. To prevent unhealthy dependency, take each puppy on outings, walks, etc. on their own sometimes. Dependency can lead to severe stress if they need to be separated at some stage in the future. On the other hand, littermates can also become deadly rivals. There is no such thing as equality in the dog world, so two dogs of the same breed, size, sex and age are potential rivals as well as potential best friends. Most rivalry only surfaces as the dogs become mature.

Maybe you already have a mature dog and plan on getting a puppy as a companion or possibly as an understudy if your dog is getting on in years. You will need to be fairly certain that the older dog will tolerate – and preferably LIKE the new puppy. Hopefully the older dog will be a good influence on the puppy, acting as a surrogate parent, aunt or uncle.

If you decide to take on two adult dogs you will need to be very careful with this choice. Unless the dogs already know each other, it will definitely be safest to get one male and one female. Males and females usually don’t fight. Two adult males can be risky and two adult females perhaps even more so.

Carefully chosen, two dogs can be great friends for each other and for you.

Next week – introducing your new dogs to each other and your family.

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