

A puppet as a gift? Let's think it over

Carried along by enthusiasm, we may give a puppy as a gift to our children who could "treat" it as a toy.

Then, confronted with the care and attention implied by having a dog living at home, you may decide to take it to the dog pound, or give it to someone else.

Unfortunately, too many of us still find it natural to abandon their dog or cat who isn't welcome anymore. **Abandoning a pet, beside being an uncivilized behaviour, is a crime punishable by the Criminal Code (section 727 title IX bis book II of the Italian Criminal Code).**

On the occasion of fairs and patron saint festivals, unscrupulous pet traders stock up on puppies from illegal importers, in the hope to sell many of them.

As a rule, when buying a pet let's retain some suggestions:

Be wary of individuals selling puppies of many different breeds: raising dogs is not that easy and entails time, money and plenty of passion. It is not possible to raise many different breeds at the same time.

Dogs must have a health card recording the vaccinationsreceived, duly endorsed by a vet, and a good health certificate issued by the vet service or by a licensed vet of the local health unit (ASL). Specific regional laws safeguard health and movements of pets.

If imported, a puppy must be at least three months old: according to Regulation 998/2003 of the Eu, 90 days is the minimum importation age for a puppy who must be accompanied by a certificate of rabies vaccination being given at least **21 days before departure**. All data, the microchip number and other vaccinations must be recorded on the dog's passport.

The puppy should **stay with its mother** at least until it is 3 months old. It will learn from its mum and its brothers and sisters the rules of social life, ensuring the pet a **normal physical and psychological development**.

Get acquainted with the environment the cat/dog has grown in, and, in any case, ensure your pet has a clean environment, without any residues of stale food, fresh water and constantly cleaned bowls.

- It is preferable to meet at least one of the pet's parents.
- Always ask details regarding the puppy's or the pet's origin and get as much information as possible.
- Try to establish a direct contact with the breeder or with the owner of one of the puppy's parents.

Remember that it is **forbidden to sell puppies that are less than two months old**. Furthermore, it is **forbidden to sell puppies that have not been identified through a microchip and registered** (Decree of the Ministry of Health of 6 August 2008. Official Journal 20 August 2008).

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