

The Right Way to Give a Pet This Season

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It's the season of giving and while a furry friend may seem like the perfect gift, there are many things to keep in mind. Pets can bring so much joy to the holiday season but once the celebrations are over, pets bring an additional responsibility to households. Before you think of buying a cuddly companion, here's some tips.

Visit the Shelter Beforehand

Often, people will gift loved ones with pets they have not met but experts recommend a visit before making the commitment. Pets are a long-term investment so ensuring the pet is appropriate and a good fit lowers the chance of returns. Getting the recipient's involved during the pet selection period can also be a great time to learn what they're looking for. Maybe they originally thought they wanted a large dog but instead they realize a smaller breed is a better fit for their home. Recipients can learn about the pet's temperament and active requirements. They may even decide that owning a pet isn't the best option after all.

Deck the Home

Not with boughs of holly but with appropriate pet supplies! To avoid any added stress during the hectic holiday season, make your space ready prior to your new pet's arrival. Whether it's essentials like a bed or food bowl or an exciting welcome home toy, turn it into a fun holiday activity and get excited to welcome another member to your family. Let your children pick out an arrangement of toys. Get a leash to introduce that there's going to be added responsibilities like walking the dog every day. Time to redecorate and move anything your pet could possibly turn into a chew toy. Set up a space where they can feel comfortable and adjust to their new environment.

Learn About Their Lifestyle

Thinking about the lifestyle of the person receiving the pet is important to consider. Does this person have any allergies? Are they allowed to have pets in their living situation? Learn what their daily schedule looks like and if they have the capacity to take on another responsibility. Can they afford the financial responsibility of owning a pet? Bringing a puppy or kitten home is a huge shift for anyone and being aware of someone's lifestyle is an important deciding factor.

Consider Gifting a Senior Pet

Although puppies and kittens are a popular choice and make great additions to families, senior pets can provide benefits that people may not be aware of. Most of the time these older furry friends already have training and calmer temperaments, perfect for families who may not have the time to train a new pet. They won't require your constant attention and have a much more independent personality.

This season is an exciting time of year and adding a lovable companion can bring so much more added joy to the season. As you make the decision to purchase any type of pet, take the time to learn about the person you are gifting and if it's suitable to their lifestyle. Remember that purchasing a pet is more than just a gift you get during the holidays but a commitment that can require a lot of attention but most importantly, a lot of love!

To learn more about Arizona Animal Welfare League, and pets up for adoption, please visit aawl.org.