

Raising Two Puppies Together

Very often I am being asked whether it is a good idea to buy two puppies and raise them together, or I am being asked what I think about getting their older dog a puppy to keep the older dog company.

I have a very simple answer : “ NO!!! It is definitely not a good idea!!!”

I will not sell two of my puppies to people who want to raise them together. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. It is difficult enough to raise one pup and give it the socialization that it needs. Two pup homes almost always end up with dogs that only getting ½ of the amount of time they need to be properly socialized.
2. Dogs are pack animals. This is a much stronger drive than the average pet owner understands. People think that their little puppy comes from an animal that has been socialized for thousands of years, so how could this have any negative effect on them.
3. When puppies are raised together they become what we call DOGGY. This means they look at the other dog as their buddy and not the human that owns it. Dogs that are raised to run together often do not develop the kind of human bond that they would have had if they had been raised in a one dog family.

These dogs are more difficult to train. Because they don't have the strong human bond, they don't have the desire to engage their owners as much as those raised alone

If you plan on raising two dogs (whether it's two pups or a pup and an adult) it is important they are never left together unattended. When I monitor them and see one trying to get snotty with one of the other dogs, I control the situation. I NEVER ALLOW dogs to settle things themselves by fighting. Many novice pet owners to often do this. That's counter productive to being a pack leader. Pack members expect the pack leader to control things. Pack members respect a pack leader who protects them from bullies.

**Adding a Third Dog to the Family**

I also do not recommend adding a 3rd dog to a family, unless the people fully understand the implications of pack behavior. In other words, if your plan is to add a male pup and not keep the dog separated from the other dogs when you are not with the dogs, then do not do it.

The new pup is going to be low man in the pack order and the other dogs are going to remind him of this all the time. They may get along fine, but one is always going to be the alpha dog. When a third puppy is added to this pack it will always be low man, and the middle dog will be all too quick to remind it of that. This will continue until the pup is 18 months to 30 months old and at that point many dogs who have lived together will start to fight.

The key to adding another dog is to keep the dogs separated from the existing dogs when you are not there. I don't allow my pups to even play with older dogs until the pups are 5 to 9 months old (or in some cases even older).

If you do not have a home with dog runs in the back yard, you can accomplish the same thing by using dog crates. Either keep the pup crated when you are gone, or when it is out of the crate keep the other dogs crated.

This does not mean that these dogs can never be allowed to play and run together. They can, but play with the pup needs to ALWAYS be supervised. If the older dogs get down on the pup, you are there to stop it.

Just as importantly, when the pup starts to mature and feel its oats around older dogs, it is your responsibility to protect the older dogs. This is especially important if the older dog is REALLY AN OLD DOG. If you don't control the pup from beating up on a really old dog, the old dog is going to have a very sad and fearful old age. Older geriatric dogs actually go into depression. So remember it's YOUR JOB to teach your pup manners.

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Maren von der Heyde, January 2016

Zwinger von der Weidenstrasse