

No Adopting a Second Puppy

Though it may seem like a fine idea, getting two puppies at once can be too much.

By Allan Reznik

Q. We just got an 8-week-old female Lab-Golden Retriever mix puppy yesterday. We are considering getting one of her sisters as well. I do not believe they were well taken care of for the first eight weeks (didn't have shots, are filthy, starving, and have fleas), and feel like we rescued her.

We have a large yard, small house, work full time outside of the home, and four children. I wonder if the one puppy would need all of our attention when we are home, due to the fact we work full time, or if a second puppy would help her. I have read some people's opinions that then we would have double mischief, and more difficulty training them at the same time, as they may listen to each other more than us/the trainer. Any advice?

A. I admire your big-hearted compassion but would not recommend adding a second puppy. With four children, a new puppy and a full-time job, it would be difficult to do justice to both puppies at once.

Young puppies, as I am sure you have discovered, are incredibly time consuming. Two puppies will often tune their owner out and take their cues from one another.

Sign up for a puppy kindergarten class to get your retriever socializing with other dogs and give her the benefit of your focused attention. With any luck, one or two of your kids are old enough to help with the training and daily dog chores.