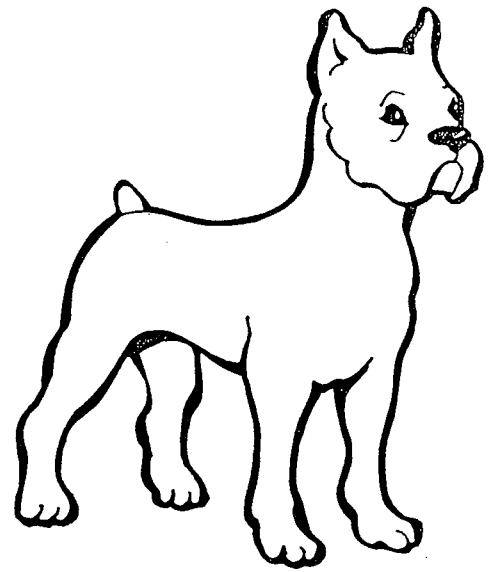


What A Puppy is NOT...



A puppy is NOT a toy.

A puppy is a living being who has a need for love and proper care for the rest of its life. He/she needs to be fed often while young as well as have sufficient rest. A young puppy is especially vulnerable to broken bones and other injuries from careless treatment.

A puppy is NOT a teaching aid.

A puppy should not be obtained to instill a sense of responsibility in children. It is unfair to place an animal's entire well-being in the hands of a child. Feeding, grooming, housebreaking and discipline training should be the principal responsibilities of adults. Responsibility training of children is better left to household tasks, where an animal's needs and well-being are not at stake.

A puppy is NOT cheap.

The purchase price or adoption fee for a pet is a mere pittance compared to the cost of veterinary care for routine and emergency treatment over the dog's lifetime as well as licensing fees and damages to personal property are bound to occur.

A puppy is NOT a gift or spur-of-the-moment commitment – or shouldn't be.

Animal shelters are overrun with dogs which were acquired for the wrong reasons or without sufficient investigation and personal commitment.

A puppy is NOT self-cleaning.

Dogs can neither groom themselves nor clean up after themselves (accidents, shedding) and therefore, impose additional workload in a household.

A puppy is NOT an adult dog.

Having neither the physical nor mental abilities of an adult dog, a puppy cannot wait long periods of time before relieving itself. It cannot differentiate between what is a toy and what isn't, nor distinguish between digestible and dangerous objects. That requires patience, understanding and supervision just as with human infants and young children. A puppy doesn't mature into an adult dog for at least two years. If you work and don't have time for training and playing with a puppy, get an older dog (or cat).

A puppy is NOT a puppy forever.

While a puppy will not stay a puppy forever, they still need your love and care forever. Be sure to understand the near-term and life-long commitment involved before succumbing to the charms of a cute little puppy.

(from Project BREED and MECKLANBURG COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY)

