

PuppySpot Advocates Responsible Puppy Gifting This Holiday Season

LOS ANGELES – December 3, 2018 – The holiday season is a popular time to look for a [new puppy](#), but it's also a time of year when pet scams run rampant. To protect prospective dog owners, PuppySpot, the trusted puppy placement service connecting dog lovers with [screened and verified breeders](#) nationwide, encourages careful research and diligence when finding a puppy in time for the holidays. PuppySpot has outlined the following reminders and best practices to ensure potential puppy owners make smart choices and [healthy puppies](#) go to happy, forever homes this holiday season.

- 1) **Understand a Puppy is a Long-Term Commitment** – A puppy should not be a surprise or impulse gift for someone who isn't ready. A puppy is a living, breathing family member that requires a forever home and long-term care. Ask the right questions of the caretaker (for example, are they financially prepared, do they have the right amount of space, is there another pet already in the house) to ensure they are ready to take on the responsibility, time and effort a new puppy requires.
- 2) **Choose a Trusted Puppy Source** – It's important to vet the place your puppy is coming from – whether it be a breeder, shelter, rescue or pet store. Check their [BBB rating](#), talk to references and [read reviews](#) from other puppy owners who have gone through the same experience. Ask the right questions including their standards of care, known health issues and puppy's parental history if known. If you cannot find third-party reviews, the source is likely fraudulent.
- 3) **Research the Right Breed for Your Lifestyle** – Do you live in an apartment or have a lot of outdoor space? Do you have allergies or a health condition that requires a [low-shedding breed](#)? Do you lead an active or more sedentary lifestyle? All of these are important questions to ask yourself when it comes to choosing the right breed for you. For example, a [Goldendoodle](#) or [Labradoodle](#) with less dander could be good fits for allergy-sufferers, while a smaller breed like a [Maltese](#) or [Shih Tzu](#) could be perfect for apartment-dwellers.
- 4) **Make the Puppy's Health First Priority** – Before welcoming home a puppy for the holidays, make sure a licensed veterinarian examines the puppy and provides a comprehensive health report including any previous diagnoses, immunization and spay/neuter records and prescriptions if necessary. Also ask about a health guarantee and what may be covered.
- 5) **Ask for Current Puppy Photos and/or Video** -- Since geographical limitations often make it difficult to visit a puppy in person, ask your breeder or shelter/rescue for up-to-date photos and videos to see your puppy's growth and development, but also to observe behavior, temperament and socialization with other puppies, adult dogs, and humans! Red flag: if you receive suspicious photos that look like stock images or where the puppy looks fake, you may be the target of a scam.
- 6) **Never Wire Money via Western Union or Moneygram** – This is the fastest way to spot an online pet scammer. Not only are these payments difficult to trace, but they cannot be canceled or reversed. A reputable source will offer alternative, safer payment methods such as credit cards or PayPal.

- 7) **Pay Attention to Suspicious Communication** – If you receive notice about payment needed immediately, red flag. If communications via email or text are filled with misspellings and bad grammar, beware. Most pet scammers reside in foreign countries so these are key clues. And lastly, if the puppy source becomes unresponsive or seems shady in any way, move on. You are right to be suspicious of any source who refuses to speak on the phone.

- 8) **Expect To Be Screened, Too** – A reputable puppy source will make sure the customer is the right fit for the puppy and that the puppy goes to a forever home. Expect a thorough screening questionnaire about lifestyle, habits, finances and more. A good service, breeder, shelter or rescue will ensure the prospective puppy owner is capable before placing a puppy.

“A puppy for the holidays can be the most magical gift,” says Jonathan Cherins, Chief Executive Officer of PuppySpot. “It’s important for future puppy parents to have the right information so they feel empowered to make smart choices and feel confident bringing home their new furry family member.”

If you’ve been a victim of a pet scam, please:

- Contact us at fightpuppyscams@puppyspot.com
- Contact the [FBI cybercrimes unit](#)
- Call the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-FTC-HELP
- Call Homeland Security Investigations at the Department of Homeland Security. 1-866-DHS-2-ICE
- If money was sent through Western Union, MoneyGram or a Green Dot MoneyPak, contact those companies directly.

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About PuppySpot

The PuppySpot brand, with puppies at its center, is rooted in its mission of placing healthy puppies into happy homes. PuppySpot believes dogs should be celebrated, and dog owners deserve to experience certainty when searching for their new companions. PuppySpot uses a personalized approach catering to the needs of those in search of a new puppy as well as the breeders who are looking for their puppies' forever homes. For more information, visit www.PuppySpot.com or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or [Twitter](#).

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