

If you are flexible, patient, and have a great sense of humor, you'll love having a whippet puppy. Nothing is sweeter or more entertaining. But you'll need all the flexibility and patience you can muster, and your sense of humor will get a real workout! When you buy a whippet puppy, you get two dogs. You get a mischievous little hellion for the first year to year and a half. After that, you have a perfect dog.

We've all heard of the 12-year-old boy who was active in scouting and was always working on a neighborhood service project: cleaning up a vacant lot or helping a elderly lady with her shopping. In his spare time he took care of younger brothers and sisters and a couple of neighbor kids. In high school he bought a car with money from a paper route and used it to visit local rest homes four times a week. Always got good grades, never seemed to need any supervision, never got in trouble. Grew up, married, had two perfect children, made lots of money, and died well-insured.

In some breeds, many puppies are like that kid. If you get one of these pups at (say) 10 weeks of age, take a week or two off to show him the ropes -- dog door or neighbor who will let him out, toys, where to poop and pee, where to sleep, and so on -- he'll get on fine when you go back to work, provided you make plenty of time for him in the evenings and on weekends.

Then there's that other kid. From the time he could walk he was always in trouble. Nothing mean or nasty, but one prank or scrape after another. Stink bombs in the classroom, the church vestry filled to the rafters with beer cans in the wee hours of Easter Sunday, more than one weekend night spent sitting with the desk sergeant at the police station waiting for dad to pick him up. Graduated from high school next to last in his class, put the muffler from the principal's car under a pile of beer cans in the back seat and left town before noon.

Then ... served two tours in the Marines, went to college, married the valedictorian, became president of the bank. Had two perfect children, made lots of money, and died well-insured. But who woulda thunk?

That kid is your average whippet puppy. Left alone for a few hours at 10 weeks of age he will forget what he knows about housetraining, shred a cushion from the couch, try to climb the curtains, open your mail, discover the fun of running with the end of the toilet paper, empty the kitchen trash on the dining room floor and try to use the TV remote with his teeth. Most whippet puppies are extremely mischievous and since they are so agile, they can get into things that puppies of other breeds wouldn't even consider! There are exceptions. Some whippet pups are

just "born good" and never seem to get in much trouble. But they're rare. Very, very rare.

This juvenile delinquent absolutely *will* become a well-behaved, loving adult whippet in a year or so if you can live with him that long. Which means he must be either crated or supervised whenever he's awake for most of his first year. And at first he needs to go out at least every hour or two and get regular exercise through the day so he'll develop normally. No young whippet should be routinely crated for periods of five or six hours at a time. A whippet puppy will be the most fun you ever had, but you've really got to have the time and patience to devote to his upbringing.

If someone responsible can't be home with your new whippet most of nearly every day for at least several months to bring up your 'teenager' we strongly advise against getting a puppy. Very good adult whippets often need new homes because of changes in a family situation, conflict with another pet, and so on. These dogs are available from rescue or sometimes directly from breeders.

Adult whippets bond easily to new families. In fact, it's a little insulting how quickly they forget the original owner! We've owned a number of whippets who came to us as adults, and honestly can't tell any difference from those we've raised from birth in their devotion to us. And the rescues and adults we have placed in other homes have left us and never looked back. We'll be happy to help you look for a whippet who has grown out of his wicked ways if you think an adult would suit you better than a puppy.