

# ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE of BOSTON



\*\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\*\*

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FOR RELEASE ON:

December 20, 2018

## **Pets as Gifts? Things to Consider**

*Animals can make great gifts, but only after careful thought and consideration*

It's a nearly perfect vision – waking up Christmas morning with the children, and nestled under the tree is a big brown-eyed puppy with a bow attached to its collar.

While this scenario can make a joyful holiday for some, it's not ideal for every family.

That being said, pets CAN make a perfect holiday gift, but with only five shopping days left, it cannot be an impulse decision and the process should start with a conversation.

If giving your loved one a new pet as a present is on your mind, here are five things to consider:

1. **Manage the surprise** – Even at the risk of spoiling the surprise, make sure that the intended recipient wants a new pet. If they currently have pets or have recently lost a pet, make sure they are ready and that introducing a new animal will not turn the household upside down.
2. **Don't make them sneeze** – Those aren't tears of joy; it's allergies! Confirm any allergies among all household members. Christmas Day in the emergency room for an allergy shot? No thanks.
3. **Know where they live** – Even if your intended recipient wants a pet, confirm that their building or development allows them. If their home is pet-friendly, you'll also want to confirm any weight or breed restrictions.
4. **Find out what they can handle** – You want to know that the animal you are getting matches the lifestyle, physical limitations, ages, and personalities in the household.
5. **Adopt from a shelter** – When you adopt, you give an animal a second chance. Adopting an animal from a reputable shelter like the Animal Rescue League of Boston also has

many benefits. All adoptable animals, for example, receive spay/neuter services, vaccines, and a health and behavioral screening.

While a 2013 ASPCA study suggests that there is no increased risk of surrender for dogs and cats received as gifts, if given the option, most pet owners would rather choose the animal themselves.

Most anyone who has adopted an animal will tell a similar story – you just know. Part of the joy of adopting is meeting a variety of animals, and when you make that instantaneous connection, you know that’s the right animal for you.

That being said, you can still surprise your loved ones. Many shelters (including ARL) offer gift certificates, or maybe a basket filled with treats, leashes and other assorted pet goodies.

If you’re looking for a family pet, a stuffed animal under the tree gets everyone excited and promises that the entire household will take part in choosing an animal. Engaging everyone in the process allows time for the important conversations about responsibilities, training and what to expect.

Pets can make for wonderful gifts, and like any meaningful gift it just requires a little more thought and strategy.

#### **ABOUT THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON:**

***The Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) is an unwavering champion for animals in need, committed to keeping them safe and healthy in habitats and homes.*** Founded in 1899, ARL provides high quality veterinary care, adoption, and rescue services; while also confronting the root causes of animal cruelty and neglect through innovative community programs, police investigations, and public advocacy. In 2017, ARL served more than 18,000 animals throughout Massachusetts. ARL is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. We receive no government grants or public funding and rely solely on the generosity of individuals to support programs and services that help animals in need.

For more information please visit us online at [www.arlboston.org](http://www.arlboston.org); and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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