



How To Pick The Right Dog For You And Your Family

Are you ready to open your home and your heart to a new dog? Choosing to bring a pup into your life is a big decision. You need to be certain that you are ready for the responsibility, the time, the cost and the love it takes to own a dog. Once you are certain, all that is left is choosing the best breed for you and your family.

All dogs are different, and all dogs are great, but there are some factors that every future dog parent should be aware of and keep in mind before adopting or buying a new dog.

Make sure you consider the following factors when you are making the major decision about picking the right dog for you:

Your lifestyle and activity level

Even though every dog needs daily walks and routine exercise, some dogs are much more energetic than others. First, you should consider getting a dog that has similar activity and energy levels as yourself and your family.

If you love spending time lounging at home reading books or watching your favorite shows and are not too

active, then you should consider getting a low-activity level pup such as a Bulldog, a Chow Chow, a French Bulldog or a Basset Hound. They need two walks a day, but during the rest of the time, they will love snoozing and being wonderful couch potatoes.

On the other hand, if you are highly active, and go running, cycling, kayaking, hiking or exercising outside, then you might want to get a dog which will happily become your running buddy or join you on your adventures, such as a Border Collie, a Dalmatian, a Jack Russell Terrier, or a Labrador.

This feature is extremely important if you want both you and your pup to be comfortable and happy living together.

If you bring in a dog with high energy levels but are not able to provide it with the exercise, playtime, and training it needs, it can easily become bored. Boredom in such dogs usually manifests itself in incessant barking, digging, chewing and other destructive behavior.

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for dogs like this to end up in shelters and be euthanized because of this type of behavior which could have easily be avoided by taking the time to train and keep the dog mentally and physically stimulated.

The size

You may have a pretty clear idea about whether you prefer a lap dog that you can carry around with you, or a majestic large or giant breed pup, but keep in mind that there are some specifics about the dogs of different sizes which you should consider before choosing a dog.

Toy, miniature and small dogs are pretty vulnerable and delicate. They can suffer serious injuries if stepped on or mishandled.

Plus, they are much more sensitive to cold temperatures, and also can easily become dehydrated or suffer from low blood glucose because of their tiny weight and bodies.

Last but not least, most small dogs have a Napoleon like attitude and think that they are much bigger pups than they are. This can lead to problems with other dogs, and also means that even the tiniest dogs need proper obedience training and socializing.

As for large and giant dogs, you should make sure that you can provide them with the space to move around and live happily. They are definitely not suitable for tiny apartments.

Also if your home is full of souvenirs or you have a collection of porcelain figures, you should know that a big and happy pup can do a lot of damage only with its wagging tail.

Last but not least, the larger the dog – the more costly the maintenance is, and the more training it requires, because the last thing you want is your giant puppy growing up to be a disobedient giant dog, right?

If you are not sure about the size, then picking a medium-sized dog could be the best option for you.

Still, you should study the different breeds carefully, because some medium-sized dogs are suitable for apartment living, and others have high energy levels and thrive well only if they have an outdoor space to roam in.

The grooming and maintenance

All pups need to be groomed, but some are more heavy shedders than others. If you are prepared to brush the dog every day and vacuum the house on a daily basis, then you can get a heavy shedding dog.

On the other hand, if you are not keen on having dog hairs all around the house and on your clothes, or if somebody in your house has a dog allergy, it is a good idea to choose one of the [hypoallergenic dog breeds](#) like Poodles, all of the Doodles (cross-breeds with Poodles), Havanese, Yorkshire Terriers or other breeds which shed very little, or do not shed at all.

Still, apart from the grooming of the coat, every dog requires nail trimming, teeth brushing and regular inspections for any problems on its skin, ears, eyes, nose, paws and entire body.

Some breed like Bloodhounds and Mastiffs do drool a lot, so this is another thing to consider.

Certain dog breeds are prone to ear infections, which is another thing to keep in mind.

Age

Puppies are amazingly cute and cuddly, but they do require quite a lot of time, attention and training, especially during the first six months. If you are ready to spend a lot of time with your fur baby and have the patience and consistency to train it, socialize it and deal with the potty training – then adopting or buying a puppy is the perfect choice for you. Also, be prepared to have to puppy-proof your home if you want to avoid having furniture, shoes and whatever you have lying around in your home being chewed up.

On the other hand, if you are not ready to do this, then you may want to opt for an adult dog. With adult dogs, there is no mystery about what you can expect when they grow up. You will know exactly what kind of temperament, activity level and behavior to expect.

You shouldn't forget that senior dogs need attention and love too. By adopting a senior dog, especially from an animal shelter, you will provide it with the love, care and attention it needs to spend its golden years.

In any case, before you go on to buy a puppy or a dog, check your local shelter for any dogs up for adoption which could be a perfect match for you. Not only will you be saving money, but you will be giving a forever home to that pup and potentially saving it from euthanasia, and believe me – it will pay you back with endless love and loyalty!