

How to Choose the Right Dog Breed for You and Your Family

The importance of choosing the most suitable type of dog breed for your personal circumstances, preferences and limitations simply cannot be stressed enough. While dogs are like people, in the sense that no two dogs have the same personality, it is also true that different breeds exhibit different behaviors and, in fact, are often bred in such a way as to heighten these particular traits. Therefore, it is possible to have a fair idea of how a potential pet will react to different situations on the basis of the breed chosen. A true dog lover will make a special effort to take into consideration all factors to ensure that the breed selected as their pet adapts well to their needs. Anyone for a Dalmatian? The first thing to bear in mind is that the type of dog chosen must fit in with your current - or projected - lifestyle. The Dalmatian can serve as a good example. This breed is well known for producing cute little puppies, but what many dog owners don't realize is that they're going to need a great deal of exercise and playing even well into their mature years. So, if you choose this breed, you have to be aware that your dog is going to need the attention and love of a master, or mistress, that has the time for it. It's going to need plenty of physical exercise and mental stimulation to be a truly healthy and happy pet. As you can imagine, this is no easy task.

Considerations Before you decide on a breed of dog, consider the following questions, as a minimum:

- How much time can I, or my family, spend with the dog or puppy?
- How often will the dog be left alone, and for how long?
- How big is the yard or exercise space?
- Is it fenced?
- Do I want the dog to be inside the house or outside? For how long?
- How much time do I have to walk or exercise the dog?
- Do I want a dog that is playful and friendly with everyone or one that is a good watchdog?
- How often am I prepared to groom and maintain the dog's coat?
- How much time can I spare to work with the dog for training and obedience?
- Will there be any small children around the dog?
- Are there other pets in the family?
- How much money am I prepared to spend on getting - and maintaining - the dog or puppy?

Once you've answered these questions, and any more that may be relevant to your particular situation, you can then start looking at the different dog breeds and their characteristics, in the knowledge that your choice will be based on sound reasoning. Make sure you get it right. If you're planning to get a new dog or puppy, the breed chosen definitely does matter, both for you and for your future pet. If you spend the time and effort to ensure a good match, you can be much more confident that both you and your pet will be happy - make sure your dog can fit easily into your lifestyle, so that you can give it, in return, the lifestyle it deserves and needs.

About the Author

Terry Roberts has always been interested in dogs and the way people and their pets get on.

If you'd like to read more about dogs and our relations with them, visit his website at <http://www.livingwithadog.com>

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