



How to Adopt the Perfect Dog

Animal shelters are full of dogs who will make wonderful lifetime companions. Deciding on who to adopt may be the hardest part of the adoption process.

- 1) Look at your lifestyle.** Are you an active person who likes to walk or hike? An active dog may be right for you. Do you live in an apartment? A mellow, more relaxed dog may suit you better. Do you have children? Ask the shelter staff about the dogs' compatibility with youngsters.
- 2) Puppy or adult?** Puppies and young dogs require more training and supervision than older dogs. Older dogs tend to be calmer and often have already had training, and shelters may have more information and history on them, especially if they have been surrendered by their guardians.
- 3) Purebred or mixed breed?** Most animal shelters have plenty of both. Purebred dogs often have needs unique to their breed. And although personality plays a big part, animals of a specific breed often share the same characteristics. This is also true of mixed breeds, who are combinations of the characteristics of multiple breeds. One advantage of mixed breed dogs is they generally don't have the congenital defects of many purebreds.
- 4) What is the personality of the dog?** Is he shy and gentle? Exuberant and active? You'll have to decide which type of disposition is best for you.
- 5) Make it a family affair.** Bring all family members to the shelter to take part in the decision.
- 6) Ask shelter staff.** They have great expertise with animals, know the shelter dogs better than anyone, and will be able to advise you on which ones would make the best match.
- 7) Looking for a specific breed not currently at the shelter?** Ask shelter staff for a referral to a breed rescue group - these groups specialize in specific breeds and have them available for adoption.
- 8) Adopt for life.** Your dog will depend on you for love and care for all of his or her lifetime.

RESOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION ON ADOPTION

www.hsus.org: Click on "Pets", then "Pet Adoption Information"

www.pets911.com: Click on "Adopt a Pet", then "Important things to think about"

Everyone can help end America's homeless animal tragedy