



## Things to Think About Before Adopting a Dog

Remember dogs are social animals. They evolved from pack animals and need to belong to a pack or “family”. Don’t let your dog live a life of isolation tied outside.



- ◆ Do I know which breed of dog is best suited to my lifestyle? Am I physically active? Some breeds require a lot of exercise and space, others are less active by nature and are more suited to people with sedentary lifestyles or limited space.
- ◆ Puppy or adult?
- ◆ Puppies usually require much more care and time than adult dogs. In contrast to adult dogs puppies go through teething, take more frequent washroom visits and have a shorter attention span for training and are very energetic.
- ◆ Puppies should never leave their mothers until they are 8wks old.
- ◆ Adult dogs will also need some training but are usually calmer and able to engage for longer periods of training.
- ◆ Their temperaments are established.



- ◆ **Is my life stable enough to offer a forever home?** Many dogs are given up by owners because they are moving .Is there a chance I will need to move in the near future? Do I own my own home or need permission from a landlord to house a dog. Is my job permanent? Is my relationship with my partner strong? What will I do with my dog if I have to move? Do all members of my household want a dog?



- ◆ **Can I provide veterinary care?** If not already provided with health records confirming the following your dog will need a health check, vaccinations, flea and worm treatments and to be spayed/neutered. You also have to be prepared for unexpected veterinary care as a result of injury or health issues. Have I researched the cost of such services? Can I afford it?



- ◆ **Do I have time to train and exercise my dog?** One of the main reasons owners tie their dogs outside permanently is because of behavioral problems that arise due to lack of training and exercise. Do I have experience training? Will I need professional help and is it available in my area? How much does it cost? Can I afford it?



- ◆ **Am I prepared for damage to my home and property while my dog becomes adjusted and trained?**



- ◆ **Is there a safe area where I can keep my dog when it's alone where it can't hurt itself or damage my property?** If I decide to crate train my dog will it be confined for long periods of time? It's inhumane to crate a dog for a full work day. It needs to be given bathroom and exercise breaks. Puppies will have to be let out more often. Is there someone at home all day to house break my dog or someone available to drop by to let my dog out during the day?



- ◆ **Do I have a fenced in back yard?** Having a "dog proof" fenced yard provides a safe play and exercise area for your dog. It prevents dangers of tangling that accompanies tethering and offers more exercise space.



- ◆ **Do I or will I have children?** Have I chosen a dog that appears to have a good temperament with children? Am I prepared to teach my child how to interact with my dog? There are more recorded incidences of dog bites in children from ages 5-7 years than from any other age group. Most of the bites are from the family dog or a dog that they know. Do I have time to supervise interaction between my dog and my child? No child should be left unsupervised with any pet.



- ◆ **Do I have other pets at home?** Introducing a new pet into a home where there are existing pets can be stressful on everyone. Do I have a plan to introduce a new pet? It can take a month or more for pets to get used to each other. Am I committed and patient enough to allow for that time?



- ◆ **Have I considered all the extra work that will result from caring for my dog:** cleaning up accidents (vomit and diarrhea), vacuuming and dusting fur from furniture and floors, mopping, poop scooping etc?



- ◆ **What are the grooming requirements of my dog?** All dogs benefit from being brushed regularly. A well maintained coat provides protection against heat, cold and moisture. Brushing also reduces shedding and matting. Will it need to be professionally groomed? How much will it cost? Will I be able to tolerate shedding? Do I need a breed that doesn't shed? Am I aware that dogs need their teeth brushed regularly to help maintain good dental health?



- ◆ **Where will my dog stay if I need to travel?** Is there a boarding facility in my area? How much does it cost? Do I have a reliable and willing neighbor or family member that would provide care? Am I aware that there are pet friendly hotels and I may be able to take my dog along with me?



- ◆ **Have I checked Animal Control regulations in my area?** Do I need to register my dog with the town? Do I have an ID tag? Will I microchip my dog? Many pets that are brought to shelters or animal control facilities can easily be reunited with their owners if they are wearing identification.



- ◆ **Have I stocked up on pet supplies** (food, treats, toys, brush, tooth brush, nail clippers, collar and leash, dishes, a bed etc)?



- ◆ **Am I ready to devote the time to my dog it will need to become the family companion I'm looking for?**



**So you are ready to adopt. Do a check list.**

- I am confident my lifestyle is stable and I can offer a dog a forever home.
- I have consent from my landlord and other family members to bring a dog into my home.
- I have researched the cost of veterinary care my dog will require and am able to afford the necessary medical needs of my dog.
- I am ready to devote the necessary time to introduce my dog to its new home, other family members and pets.
- I am ready for the extra work involved in training and exercising my dog and caring for my home and yard.
- I have someone to provide care for my dog if I have to travel.
- I will register my dog with my town council and have appropriate identification.
- I have stocked up on supplies.
- I understand that my dog is my responsibility and I am ready to provide it with a loving home and treat it with kindness.
- My dog is my companion and is not disposable.