



The Inside Scoop on DOG BREEDS

What You Have To Know Before Buying Your New Dog

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The Inside Scoop on DOG BREEDS

Choosing the Right Dog Breed – A Step By Step Guide

Did you know that there are several hundred dog breeds? With that large number of breeds to choose from, how do people manage to decide which breed is right for them? Luckily, you can narrow down the choices and find the right dog breed by following a few simple steps.

First, consider your available space. Do you live in an apartment? If so, you will want to rule out large dogs. Look for dogs in the Toy group, such as Yorkshire Terriers, or some of the smaller dogs in the Terrier group, like the Miniature Schnauzer.

If you have children, you will want to consider the size of your dog, as well. Very small dogs, such as Chihuahuas or Maltese, can be very delicate and are often accidentally injured by young children. On the other hand, very large dogs, such as Boxers or Saint Bernards, can be overly boisterous as puppies and can accidentally turn your child into a human bowling pin. Consider medium sized breeds, such as Fox Terriers or Lhasa Apsos, instead.

Next, consider how much exercise you can give your dog. If you have a home with a fenced yard, your dog will be able to get some exercise on his own. However, dog breeds in the Sporting, Hound, and Herding groups are very high energy animals and you will need to have enough time to provide them with more intensive exercise. Plan to take a lot of long walks with your dog or go for a daily romp in the park. After all, these dog breeds were bred to work hard and don't do well unless they have a job to do or a way to burn off excess energy.

Finally, don't forget to consider grooming needs. Some dog breeds only need a half hour or so of grooming a week, while others need to be groomed for an hour a day. If you are short on time, don't buy a Standard Poodle or a Maltese, unless, of course, you plan to take your dog to a groom. Breeds like Boston Terriers or Whippets are good choices for people who don't have time to do a lot of grooming.

Once you decide which breed of dog you want, you will need to consider the age of the dog. Many people opt to buy a cuddly little puppy instead of an older dog. While puppies have not developed any bad habits, it will be up to the new owner to be sure that the puppy becomes housebroken and obedience trained. Older dogs are frequently already housebroken and usually have some obedience training. They are also more likely to be less hyper and less destructive. However, they can have behavioral problems or health problems that prompted the former owner to find them a new home.

Do you want to buy a puppy? If so, you will need to find a reputable dog breeder who has a litter of the breed you are interested in. Often, a good breeder will have a waiting list for puppies. If you aren't the patient sort, you may be tempted to buy a puppy from a pet store. However, many pet store puppies come from puppy mills and have genetic health defects, bad temperaments, or other problems. It is usually safest to buy a puppy directly from the breeder.

If you are interested in an older dog, you may want to visit your local animal shelter or call a breed rescue. These groups evaluate the dogs' health and temperament before adopting them out.

Once you've narrowed down the breed choices and have decided which dog is right for you, don't get too relaxed. After all, you still have one more important decision to make, what to name your new companion!

Buying a Second Dog

If you are a dog lover, you may feel that one dog is not enough. However, before you add a second dog to your household, there are a few important points you should consider.

First, you may want to consider your dog's nature. If your beloved pet is a bit of a bully and the new dog isn't submissive, there are going to be some major battles before they sort out which dog is in charge. Sometimes, two dogs are equally dominant and these battles flare up again and again. By the time you visit your veterinarian for the fourth or fifth time to have their battle scars treated, you may be regretting the purchase of a second dog.

If your dog is very submissive, you may also have problems, as the new dog could bully your first dog and make his life miserable. Hopefully, you have a dog that does not lean too far in either direction. When you have a submissive dog at home, never buy a puppy that refuses to let you turn it over and cradle it upside down in your arms. When a puppy lets you hold it like you would hold an infant, it is a sign that the puppy is willing to be submissive.

Next, you should consider your current dog's size. If you have a Yorkshire Terrier, you may not want to buy a Boxer puppy. A big, rowdy puppy can hurt a small dog quite a few times before it realizes its own strength. If you currently own a big dog who has a great temperament, you may be able to add a small breed puppy to the family, but you will have to be prepared to keep a close eye on the dogs at first when they are together. More than one Standard Poodle or Saint Bernard has become the devoted protector of a tiny lap dog.

Do you have an unaltered female dog? These dogs often are upset when another female dog enters their domain. You may need to alter your dog before she will accept another female. She may still show some aggression after being spayed, so a male puppy may be a wiser choice. (Of course, you will have to alter at least one of your dogs unless you want to suddenly be the proud owner of 6 or 8 dogs.)

If you have an older dog, you may want to reconsider buying a puppy. These dogs often have aches and pains and are less patient than they were when they were younger. Instead, you may want to consider adding a more settled and mature dog to the family. After all, it will be easier on your older dog to adjust to a dog who has finished teething and chewing.

Finally, some breeds of dogs have more trouble accepting a new puppy than other breeds. Some of the toy breeds become a bit spoiled and jealous of other dogs. If you have a

pampered Yorkshire Terrier or Miniature Pinscher, you may find that introducing the new puppy can be a bit of a challenge. Pit Bulls, Rottweilers, and other breeds that have problems with aggression may have problems, as well. However, each dog is an individual and some dogs who are members of these breeds have no problem accepting a new puppy.

Choosing a Good Dog Breeder

Have you ever purchased a car that was a lemon? Facing problem after problem robs you of the pleasure of enjoying your new car. Unfortunately, there are dogs that are lemons, too. A dog with health problems can lead to heartache and empty checkbooks. A good dog breeder will stand behind health guarantees and do everything possible to set things right if you end up with a dog that has a serious health defect.

There are several types of dog breeders. The first type is a person who shows dogs and works hard to maintain the breed standard. The puppies this breeder produces will often be more expensive than other puppies, but there are several advantages to buying one. These breeders test their dogs for common genetic diseases and they only breed their best dogs, because they are breeding dogs to acquire a new generation of champions. This means that the resulting puppies that are not show quality are usually still quite nice.

The second type of dog breeder is usually called a backyard breeder. These breeders rarely show dogs and often have a litter of puppies just because they want other people to have a dog just like theirs. Unfortunately, few backyard breeders test for diseases or know how to look for traits that match the breed standard.

The final type of dog breeder is often called a puppy mill breeder. These breeders have many different breeds of dogs and often breed their females until the dogs become run down and die. Puppies are frequently very poor examples of the breed and may have genetic health problems as well as diseases such as Kennel Cough.

Obviously, you want to find a good dog breeder. However, knowing the importance of finding a good dog breeder doesn't always make it easy to locate one. Fortunately, if you look for signs of a good breeder and ask the breeder the right questions, you should be able to tell if you've found a good breeder.

First, take a look at how the breeder is advertising. Breeders who advertise in newspapers are not necessarily unethical. Some of them love their dog breed, but do not care for the show world. However, be wary of an advertisement that lists puppies from five different dog breeds and a few poodle mixes thrown in for good measure.

Next, ask the breeder to allow you to stop in and look at the puppies. If the breeder refuses and offers to deliver the puppy or meets you outside with a portable pen full of puppies, it may very well be because of safety concerns. However, it could also mean that the breeder's kennel is dirty and the dogs are not cared for properly.

Once you've seen those adorable puppies, do not pull out your check book. Instead, ask the breeder whether they've been to a vet and ask about a health guarantee. Some breeders vaccinate the puppies themselves, but there is a chance they did not give the vaccinations correctly and that the puppies are still vulnerable to disease. Also, the puppies could have serious hereditary defects, such as a severe heart murmur, that a preliminary health exam would have uncovered.

Finally, ask for references from previous owners and get the name and phone number of the breeder's veterinarian. Then, go home and call the references and ask them about their experience with the breeder and ask how their puppies turned out. If you are satisfied with the response of the references, call the veterinarian to verify that the breeder really did bring the puppies in.

Now, you can finally buy your new puppy. Of course, first you will have to decide which of those little balls of fluff is the right dog for you!

The AKC – Know Your Dog's Genealogy

When you shop for a purebred dog, you will probably notice that many breeders use the initials AKC when they talk about their purebred puppies. What exactly is the AKC? These initials stand for the American Kennel Club, a registry for purebred dogs born in the United States. The AKC holds dog shows and obedience competitions, helps maintain breed standards, and registers puppies of recognized breeds. The AKC registers dogs from over a hundred different dog breeds.

For a dog to be registered with the AKC, the breeder needs to have AKC papers for both parents. Each litter is registered as a group shortly after the puppies are born. When the puppies are eight weeks old, the breeder gets a registration application for each puppy. This form goes with the puppy to his new home. The new owner chooses a name to register the puppy under and sends the application in to the American Kennel Club.

The AKC has divided the dog breeds it recognizes into eight different groups. These groups are the Sporting Group, the Hound Group, the Working Group, the Terrier Group, the Toy Group, the Non-Sporting Group, the Herding Group, and the Miscellaneous Class. Each dog breed recognized by the AKC is placed in one of these groups and will compete in its breed and then its group in the show ring.

Dogs in the Sporting Group are an active, hard working bunch. These dogs need plenty of exercise, since they were bred to spend long hours spotting and retrieving game. Some popular members of the Sporting Group are the Golden Retriever and the Cocker Spaniel.

The Hound Group also is made up of dogs that work with hunters to catch game, but these guys are all about the chase. Hounds can be slow and methodical, like the Bloodhound, or fast and impatient, like the Greyhound.

If you are more concerned about protecting your home, you will want to take a look at dogs in the Working Group. These big dogs are powerful animals with strong protective instincts. Doberman Pinschers and Rottweilers are just two of the dog breeds in this group.

Dogs in the Terrier Group love to hunt mice and rats. This group includes the dour Scottish Terriers and the personable Miniature Schnauzers.

The Toy Group may be made up of dogs that are small in size, but their hearts are just as big as those of any other dogs. The Yorkshire Terrier and the Miniature Pinscher are both Toy dogs.

Dogs in the Herding Group have a strong herding instinct. The Collie and the German Shepherd are members of this group.

The Non-Sporting Group contains dogs that don't quite fit anywhere else. The Boston Terrier and Standard Poodles are members of the Non-Sporting Group.

The final group, the Miscellaneous Class, is where the AKC puts breeds that are still proving themselves. The Redbone Coonhound is a member of this group.

While the AKC may be the most popular kennel club in America, it is far from being the only kennel club. If your dog is not registered with AKC, you may be able to still register it with another group. The United Kennel Club, the American Canine Association, the Canine Kennel Club, and the North American Purebred Dog Registry are a few other American kennel clubs.

Of course, foreign born dogs have ancestors, too. There is some type of dog registry in most countries. Most dogs born outside of the United States must be registered with their country's breed registry and then brought to the United States before the AKC will consider registering them.

British dogs are registered through the Kennel Club, while dogs born in Australia are registered by the Victorian Canine Association, which is part of Australia's National Kennel Council.

The Canadian Kennel Club, or CKC, is Canada's version of the AKC. Dogs registered with the CKC do not have to come to the United States to be registered with the AKC.

As you look into the different registries available, just remember that even if you can't register your dog, the most important thing about him is not his pedigree. Enjoying his loving, loyal companionship is more important than knowing who his ancestors are!

TYPES OF DOGS AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS:

Is a Basset Hound Right for You?

If you melt at the sight of big sad eyes, you may not be able to resist buying a Basset Hound puppy. These dogs have eyes that would melt even the hardest heart and a sweet and loving disposition to boot.



The Basset Hound has a keen sense of smell and can track scents almost as well as its ancestor, the Bloodhound. In fact, this member of the American Kennel Club's hound group is apt to become so obsessed with a scent that he will ignore commands to come or heel. Basset Hounds were developed to be able to track scents through tight areas where the larger scent hounds could not fit.

The Basset Hound weighs around sixty pounds and stands between eighteen and twenty inches high. These dogs can come in any AKC recognized hound dog color, although a dog with a white base coat with brown and black patches is most common. The Basset has long, droopy ears which almost touch the ground when he is standing. His undershot jaw, broad chest, and short legs combine to give him a comical and clumsy appearance, but this dog can actually move very gracefully.

Basset Hounds are ideal apartment dogs, as long as neighbors don't mind their mournful vocalizations. These dogs actually don't care to exercise unless they are tracking a scent, but they must receive daily exercise to stay healthy. To keep your Basset in shape, you will have to walk with him, even if you have a fenced yard.

If you are looking for a pet who does well with children or other pets, then a Basset Hound is a wonderful choice. These dogs adore people and will do anything to be with them. More than one Basset has endured the indignity of dressing up in frilly gowns just so he can spend time with the children he loves.

Although Basset Hounds are loving and devoted pets, they do have a stubborn streak. Some people mistake this stubbornness for an intelligence problem and think that their Basset isn't smart enough to learn obedience. However, if you look closely at your Basset as he is disobeying, you may just catch a naughty twinkle in his big, sad eyes. Your Basset is more apt to obey commands that mean he is spending time with you than commands that don't interest him, such as the stay command. Since these dogs are a bit difficult to train, you may want to consider taking your puppy to obedience classes to get professional training help.

Basset Hounds love to eat. Since this chow hound behavior and their disinterest in exercise is a bad combination, you will need to keep a close eye on your Basset's food consumption. If your Basset becomes overweight, ask your veterinarian to recommend a food that will help him lose some weight.

Bassets require little grooming. Brush through his hair once a week to remove dirt and loose hair. You may also need to check his ears to be sure he doesn't develop any problems, since the air may not circulate well in such droopy ears. In fact, ear infections are one of the main

health problems with this breed. Other common health problems are spinal related injuries and eye diseases.

If you want a dog whose sole purpose is to please his owners, then a Basset Hound may be the perfect choice for you and your family.

So You Want a Beagle

When you think of Beagles, you probably picture a pack of these little guys baying at the top of their lungs as they race after a fox or rabbit. While it is true that these dogs are popular hunting dogs and have been used to hunt for several centuries, they also make wonderful family pets.

The Beagle has a keen sense of smell and a strong hunting instinct. This member of the American Kennel Club's hound group actually comes in two sizes, under thirteen inches and thirteen to fifteen inches. Except for the difference in size, both Beagle varieties are identical. The beagle has dark eyes, droopy ears, and a long tail. Its coat is short and most commonly comes in a combination of tan, black and white colors. You can also find orange, black, or tan dogs with white markings.

The Beagle can adapt to apartment life, but may prove to be annoying to neighbors if he constantly warns you of strange noises. These dogs are tireless hunters and need a way to burn off some of that energy, so you will need to take your Beagle for long walks or go for a romp in the park. Think twice before letting him off the leash, however, since a Beagle who is hot on the trail of a rabbit will forget all of his obedience training while he tracks down his prey.

The Beagle loves children and other dogs, but will probably take every available opportunity to harass the family cat. These dogs are very playful and affectionate, but they do tend to sulk if they don't get their own way. In fact, these dogs are so sensitive that something as simple as someone laughing at one of them when he has gotten into some mishap can cause the Beagle to brood for days. You may need to warn your children to avoid upsetting your dog's delicate sensibilities.

Although Beagles occasionally get too caught up in the chase to obey commands, they still should learn at least basic obedience. It will require patience and hard work to teach your dog, and you may want to consider getting some professional help by enrolling your little guy in puppy obedience classes.

Beagles love to eat and they aren't picky. If you put your dog on a diet, he will happily eat garbage. In fact, even if he isn't on a diet, he may still hit the trashcans for an after dinner snack.

Your Beagle should be groomed once a week to alleviate shedding. Beagles usually get enough exercise to wear down their toenails on their own, but you may want to check your dog's nails to see if they need to be trimmed at least once a month.

Beagles are generally a healthy breed. However, some of these dogs can develop heart disease or epilepsy. Of course, with their propensity to overeat, Beagles can also develop weight related diseases.

If you want a dog who is a happy, well mannered little companion, then a Beagle may be the right dog for you.

So You Want a Bichon Frise

If you suffer from allergies, but want to have a dog, you may want to take a look at the Bichon Frise. This charming little dog's sole function is to provide companionship and it does its job extremely well.



The Bichon Frise is classified as a part of the Non-Sporting Group by the American Kennel Club. The Bichon is a seven to thirteen pound dog that stands only nine to eleven inches tall. These fluffy little dogs are known for their thick white coats and alert, cheerful eyes. The Bichon's tail is carried proudly over its back.

Bichons are a perfect choice for a family dog, as long as the children are old enough to know how to handle a dog without hurting it. Although your Bichon may tolerate rough treatment, he can easily be injured. These dogs get along well with older children, as well as dogs and other pets.

Since the Bichon Frise loves to spend time with people, this breed is quite content with life in apartments or town homes. Of course, your dog won't object to a home with a fenced yard. If you don't have a fenced yard, you should be prepared to take your dog for a daily stroll around the block so he stays healthy and strong.

Although Bichon Frises are small dogs and do not have stubborn tendencies, it is still a good idea to teach your puppy some basic obedience commands. If your Bichon ever runs out the front door and heads for the street, you will want to be sure that you can call him back to your side. Of course, you can teach him a few simple commands yourself, but puppy obedience classes can make training easier. In addition, these classes are a good way for you to teach your puppy socialization skills. Of course, once you begin obedience classes, your little guy's aptitude for obedience may just convince you to keep on learning. These dogs have a reputation for being incredibly intelligent. In fact, Bichons often perform as highly trained circus dogs.

Bichon Frises are not expensive to feed. Since small dogs often have dental problems, you may want to make sure that you use a dry food diet. If you decide to feed your puppy soft food, be sure you brush his teeth frequently.

The one drawback of the Bichon Frise breed is that these dogs need extensive grooming. You will need to brush out your Bichon's fluffy coat frequently or he will look like a ratty mop head instead of a beautiful, elegant little dog. You will also need to have his coat cut and shaped at least once a month. If you can't groom your dog yourself, this can become a major expense.

The good news is that Bichon Frises are a very healthy breed. This breed actually has no common health problems.

If you want a sweet and affectionate pet who doesn't cause you to break out in hives, then a Bichon Frise may just be the perfect dog breed for you and your family.

Should You Buy a Bloodhound?

The Bloodhound is a familiar sight in movies that feature escaped convicts. Although the sound of these big dogs baying as they find the scent they are searching for may be a chilling sound to an escapee, it can be a comforting sound. After all, Bloodhounds are also used to track people who are lost or disoriented.

The Bloodhound, which is a member of the American Kennel Club's Hound Group, stands twenty three to twenty seven inches tall and weighs in at eighty to one hundred ten pounds. These dogs are known for their long droopy ears and their gloomy looking wrinkled faces. They have short coats of coarse hair, which can come in black and tan, red, or liver and tan colors.

Although criminals fear Bloodhounds, these dogs are actually too sweet to be used as guard or attack dogs. It is true that a Bloodhound will track down a man's scent, but these dogs do not hunt people to hurt them. Bloodhounds need to work with handlers because they will rush right up to a hardened killer and greet him like a long lost friend.

While their gentle nature makes these dogs a wonderful choice for families, Bloodhounds do have some quirks. This breed is a decision maker, which means it does not do well with obedience training. The same traits that enable this breed to track down scents make the Bloodhound less likely to obey and more stubborn than most other breeds. Teaching your Bloodhound to obey involves a lot of patience and understanding. Never yell at him or treat him roughly, as he may become permanently scarred from this treatment. If you can't teach your dog to obey commands, you may want to consider getting help from a professional dog trainer who uses positive reinforcement methods.

Although the Bloodhound loves to spend time with its family, this breed cannot endure life in the city. Bloodhounds need more exercise than most breeds. A house with a large fenced yard is ideal. You may also need to take your Bloodhound for long walks to burn off excess energy.

Bloodhounds enjoy eating and can make a considerable difference in your grocery budget. Since these dogs can suffer from stomach problems and are prone to developing hip dysplasia, you may want to consult your veterinarian to see if you should use a special dog food for your Bloodhound.

Although Bloodhounds do not need to be brushed frequently, they do need to have their face wrinkles and creases cleaned to prevent odors and bacteria growth. You also should be prepared for your dog to develop ear infections if enough air does not circulate to his ears.

Any breed that has been around long before the Dark Ages will have a few health problems. Besides hip dysplasia and stomach problems, the Bloodhound can suffer from eyelid problems. However, the Bloodhound's most frustrating problem is not actually a disease. The droopy lips that add to this breed's mournful appearance cause the Bloodhound to drool and slobber more than most other breeds.

If you want a dog breed that has withstood the test of time and still has a wonderful personality, you may want to take a close look at the Bloodhound.

Is a Boston Terrier Right for You?

Do you want a dog that is as all American as apple pie? If so, you may want to consider the Boston Terrier, which is one of the few breeds developed in the USA.

These comical charmers originated in Boston in the 1800's. The Boston Terrier was the first American breed accepted by the American Kennel Club, which classified it as part of the Non-Sporting Group. These dogs weigh 15 to 25 pounds and stand 15 to 17 inches tall.

These highly intelligent dogs have a square skull and a short muzzle. Their floppy jaws give them a slightly clownish appearance and their short tails can be straight or corkscrewed. The Boston Terrier's coat can be brindle, seal, or black, with white markings. The ideal Boston has symmetrical markings, with a blaze of white between the eyes and a white chest and front legs.

The Boston Terrier is a kind, friendly dog and rarely meets a person it doesn't like. Bostons love family gatherings, which mean they get tons of attention and some tasty treats. This breed absolutely adores children, although puppies may be too rough and rowdy for toddlers unless they are closely supervised. The Boston is known for its high energy and slightly boisterous behavior.

Since Boston Terriers are such intelligent dogs, they enjoy learning. Puppy classes are important for this breed, since without something to occupy, your Boston's energy will get him into a ton of mischief. Once you see how quickly your Boston Terrier masters basic obedience, you may want to start competing in obedience and agility trials with him. Most of these dogs love the chance to put on a performance for a crowd and genuinely enjoy competing in these trials.

Despite its high energy, the Boston Terrier can thrive in an apartment or small house. However, if you do not have a fenced yard, you will need to take your dog for a long walk or a romp in the park each day. If you cut your dog's exercise routine short, don't be surprised if he is bouncing off the walls the next day, especially if he is a young dog.

For many years, the Boston Terrier breed was in serious danger of being destroyed by irresponsible breeders, who did not care breeding dogs with genetic problems. With hard work and careful breeding, fanciers have brought this breed back from the brink. However, the breed still suffers from a few common health problems. These dogs are prone to cataracts, deafness, hypothyroidism, heart murmurs, and bad knees. In addition, many Bostons have a weakened

immune system, especially when they are under six months of age. This can lead to a serious case of Demodectic mange, which is a non-contagious condition that results in bald spots. A bad case of Demodectic mange can leave your dog completely bald and covered in sores. Most dogs grow out of the condition with treatment, but some never recover and have to be put down after developing massive skin infections.

Boston Terriers are chow hounds, but still do not eat nearly as much as bigger breeds. While they are young and active, these dogs burn through all of those calories fast, but you will need to keep a close eye on your dog's weight as he ages. If he starts to bulk up around his chest, ask your veterinarian about a diet for overweight dogs.

Unless your Boston Terrier develops Demodectic mange, you will not need to groom him more than once a week. If he does have mange, you will need to give him a daily bath and you will need to take him to the veterinarian frequently for additional treatment.

The Boston Terrier can be a bit overwhelming for some people, but if you don't mind a little noise and rowdy behavior, why not let this dog charm you with his loving, affectionate nature.

Is a Boxer the Right Breed for You?

If you want a dog that is a marshmallow with your children, but a strong deterrent to criminals, you may want to take a look at the Boxer. The Boxer gets its name from its habit of using its front legs to box when it is fighting. These powerful dogs were originally used as hunting dogs, although they quickly became popular as police and military dogs in Europe. As people began to discover how devoted and loving the Boxer was to its family, this dog breed turned into a companion dog, as well. Interestingly enough, the versatile Boxer didn't become popular in the United States until men returning from fighting in World War II brought some of these dogs home with them.



Although Boxers are considered to be medium sized dogs, they have the strength of a big dog. A young, healthy Boxer is all muscle and energy and weighs in at fifty to eighty pounds. These dogs have a broad chest, a wide skull and a face similar to that of a Bulldog. Their big brown eyes are very expressive and these dogs are not above using a pitiful 'poor me' look to get their own way.

Boxers should be fawn or brindle with black mask like markings on their face. A dog with white markings is considered to be flashy. However, if a Boxer has more than one third of its body covered in white or is completely white, it will be unable to compete in the show ring. Also, white Boxers are prone to deafness, as well as other health problems.

If you live in an apartment, a Boxer may not be the right breed for you. These dogs are high energy animals and really need to be able to exercise frequently. A home with a securely fenced yard is ideal for a Boxer. You will need to be sure the fence is high enough and secure enough to prevent your dog from escaping, since a Boxer can easily jump over lower fences.

Although most Boxers get along well with other dogs, you may not want to buy a Boxer if you have a small dog or cat. If you do have other dogs, consider neutering your Boxer at six months to keep aggression toward other dogs in check. Small children and Boxers get along quite nicely, although your Boxer may be too energetic to play with toddlers until he matures. After all, a young, exuberant Boxer can easily knock an adult flat with an overly enthusiastic greeting.

Since Boxers are so high energy and so powerful, these dogs need to be enrolled in obedience training while they are still easy to control. Puppy classes can also help you socialize your Boxer and will teach him to play nicely with other dogs. These dogs are eager to please and should pick up basic obedience commands quickly. You may want to consider advanced obedience and agility training for your Boxer, as well.

Boxers require very little grooming. Simply brush through your dog's sleek coat once a week to remove loose hair so you don't have to vacuum it off of your floor. You should also clean your dog's teeth and check his nails to see if they need to be trimmed.

Boxers are hearty eaters. You should consider feeding your dog a food formulated for large dogs, since Boxers are prone to hip dysplasia. These dogs have relatively few other serious health problems. You may want to check for a history of heart or thyroid disease before buying a puppy.

So, if you want a dog who will be a devoted friend and companion, then a Boxer may be the perfect choice for you.

So You Want a Bulldog

A Bulldog is much more than a pair of sad eyes and droopy jaws, but this dog's appearance is a major reason for its popularity. The other reason these dogs are so popular is that they have a sweet and gentle nature.



This breed was originally created to help butchers slaughter bulls. Some people used the tenacious nature of the Bulldog to turn their dogs into bull baiters. When this ugly sport was outlawed, people that loved the breed began breeding only the sweetest dogs. Today, these dogs are sociable, friendly animals.

The Bulldog is a medium sized dog, but is still very powerful. These dogs weigh 40 to 50 pounds and stand 12 to 16 inches high. A Bulldog has a squat body, a flat forehead, and large jaws. This breed has dark, gentle eyes. Some Bulldogs have corkscrew tails, but they can also have straight tails.

The American Kennel Club classifies this breed as a member of the Non-Sporting Group. These odd looking dogs have one purpose, to be devoted companions. Luckily, they are well suited to their role.

Bulldogs are the ideal pets for apartment owners. They are very low energy and do not need to spend a lot of time exercising. Of course, they still enjoy taking a leisurely evening walk with their owners.

Of course, like any breed, the Bulldog does have a few flaws. When you live with a Bulldog, you may feel as though you are living in a frat house, since this breed will snore, drool, and pass gas frequently. Sometimes, one of these normally sweet natured dogs will bully other dogs, especially if there is food involved.

Despite their size, Bulldogs can be quite powerful. Because of this, it will be much easier for you to start training your dog as a puppy. Luckily, these dogs are eager to please their owners, although they are not always quick learners. In fact, some Bulldogs cannot understand even the simplest commands until they are six months old.

A Bulldog has a bit of a reputation as a chow hound. This breed likes to eat. However, you will need to be sure that you do not let your Bulldog overeat, since obesity can lead to serious health problems. Other health problems these charmers face are allergies, hip dysplasia, eye problems, and breathing problems.

Bulldog owners need to be especially careful to keep their dogs out of the sun. These dogs can overheat easily, which can prove fatal. Also, since this breed is prone to breathing problems, Bulldogs should never be walked using a choke collar. A harness will help you prevent their already small tracheas from being damaged.

With their short coats, Bulldogs need very little grooming. However, the wrinkles on their face require careful cleaning. If you do not keep your Bulldog's wrinkles clean, he could develop skin infections, not to mention a nasty odor.

If you want a loving family pet and can overlook the fact that your little guy is a bit odoriferous, then a Bulldog may just be the right breed for you.

So You Want a Bull Terrier

The Bull Terrier is a good dog that has developed a bad reputation. This dog was created to fight and when a Bull Terrier is mistreated, it can be made into a dog that is quite aggressive, even vicious. With proper care and training, a Bull Terrier puppy can grow up to be a sweet and loving dog. In fact, at times this breed is even slightly silly. However, an older dog who has been mistreated may never be truly trustworthy and should not be placed in a home where it has access to children.



The Bull Terrier is a member of the American Kennel Club's terrier group and most commonly comes in pure white or brindle. Brindle dogs can have white markings, but they cannot be predominantly white. Don't confuse this dog with its relative, the American Pit Bull Terrier. The Bull Terrier is a solidly built, muscular animal, weighing in at fifty five to seventy pounds. The

dog's broad chest and bullet shaped head are distinctive identifying characteristics for the breed.

The Bull Terrier is content living in an apartment as long as it receives plenty of exercise. However, these dogs prefer living in a home with a roomy, securely fenced yard. No matter where or how you exercise your dog, be sure he cannot escape, as some Bull Terriers and cats or small dogs can be a deadly combination.

The Bull Terrier loves family life and often is quite good with children. These dogs love to play and will spend hours playing frisbee. However, if you do not have children of your own, and your Bull Terrier isn't used to small children, never leave your Bull Terrier with visiting children unattended, as infants and toddlers are sometimes mistaken for other animals instead of people.

If you've never owned a dog before, then the Bull Terrier is definitely not for you. These dogs are not a good match with inexperienced dog owners. In addition, if you are a shrinking violet instead of an assertive person, your Bull Terrier will sense this. He will quickly dominate you and rule your household.

Since Bull Terriers are such powerful animals, you will need to be sure your dog is thoroughly trained before he gets too big for you to control easily. It is a good idea to enroll your dog in puppy obedience classes, so you can be sure he is correctly trained while he is small. In addition, obedience classes are an important step in socializing your puppy.

Bull Terriers can put away quite a bit of dog chow. While they don't eat as much as a Great Dane, these dogs can make a noticeable difference in the grocery budget. You may want to ask your veterinarian about feeding your Bull Terrier a dog chow that alleviates kidney problems. Besides being prone to kidney disease, the Bull Terrier can develop heart disease or deafness.

Your Bull Terrier needs very little grooming. You may want to brush him weekly to remove loose hair and dirt to keep his coat looking smooth and healthy. You may also want to brush his teeth and trim his nails.

If you are an experienced dog owner and are willing to work with your dog to turn him into a good citizen, then you may want to take a look at the Bull Terrier.

Should You Buy a Chihuahua?

If you watch television, you've probably seen celebrities like Paris Hilton toting around tiny dogs with big poppy brown eyes. These dogs, called Chihuahuas, are one of the smallest dog breeds in the world. The Chihuahua first appeared in Mexico and does well in warmer climates. Of course, a doggy sweater can make one of these small dogs feel warm and cozy during winter months.

The Chihuahua weighs in as a lightweight at one to six pounds and stands only about five inches high. These little dogs come in a wide range of colors, although tan or black and tan

dogs are most common. They have prick ears, an alert expression, and big, slightly poppy eyes. This breed has both short haired and long haired varieties.

The American Kennel Club considers Chihuahuas to be part of the Toy Group. These dogs were bred to be companion dogs and they excel at this task. This breed hates to be alone and thrives when it is in the thick of things.

Chihuahuas are ideal apartment dogs, since they do not take up much room and do not need a ton of exercise. Some people even train these little guys to use a litter box. This doesn't mean that a Chihuahua won't enjoy living in a house with a yard, though. This breed enjoys exercising and playing outdoors on warm days.

The Chihuahua can sometimes be nippy with small children, especially if it is accidentally injured and has reason to fear being handled by them. This breed also tends to be bossy and easily spoiled, especially if the dog's owners allow it to get away with aggressive or angry behaviors. If you have other dogs, you will need to be sure that your Chihuahua does not bully them. These dogs will pick a fight with much larger dogs, since they sincerely believe that they have the size and strength of a Rottweiler. In fact, the Chihuahua is a wonderful guard dog and will also take on human intruders.

Because they have a tendency to be self centered and badly behaved, Chihuahuas should receive puppy obedience training. After all, even a tiny tyrant can be unpleasant to be around. Puppy classes will help your dog to learn basic obedience, but they also have another important purpose, socializing your puppy. He will learn at an early age to get along with people and other dogs. Despite their size, these dogs are quite intelligent and do well with obedience training. Some of them even go on to take agility classes.

Chihuahuas eat very little, but feeding costs can still be a bit high, since these dogs are often picky eaters. Also, this breed is so delicate that some dogs have trouble eating hard, dry food. Chihuahuas are prone to dislocated jaws, fractures, epilepsy and rheumatism.

Short haired Chihuahuas require very little care. Long haired Chihuahuas need a bit more grooming, but still do not need to be brushed more than once a week. With their tiny jaws, it is no surprise that some of these dogs have dental problems, so you may also want to brush your dog's teeth daily.

If you want a dog who is small enough to tuck into your pocket, but has the heart of a much bigger dog, then a Chihuahua may be the right dog for you.

Is a Chow Chow the Breed for You?

Normally, a blue tongued dog would be a cause for concern. However, when that blue tongue belongs to your Chow Chow, it is completely normal. Chow Chows have a black tongue with a distinctive bluish tint.

The Chow Chow originated in China, where it was used as a hunting dog. Asian sailors brought these dogs with them to England, where their exotic appearance quickly made them popular. This breed is classified by the American Kennel Club as a member of the Non-Sporting group.

The Chow Chow is a 45 to 70 pound dog that stands 17 to 20 inches high. Its down turned lips can give this breed a deceptively angry appearance. This unfriendly impression is offset by the tail curling over the dog's back and its thick double coat. The red Chow Chow is most common, but these furry dogs also can have black, blue, cinnamon, or cream colored coats.

Chow Chows are not high energy dogs, but they do need a bit more exercise than an apartment provides. A small fenced yard is adequate for this breed. If you do live in an apartment, be prepared to take your Chow Chow for a daily run. However, do not allow him to run loose in the park, as Chows are prone to aggressiveness toward other dogs.

While Chow Chows are devoted to their families and usually love children, they do not often do well with other pets. New owners should concentrate on socializing their puppies to be sure they do not grow up to be dangerous or aggressive to strangers. Puppy obedience classes are a good way to socialize your puppy while being sure it receives thorough obedience training.

Besides their tendency to be aloof and unfriendly to people outside the family, these dogs do have a few other drawbacks. They have a tendency to dominate people if they can get away with it and they can bully inexperienced dog owners. You will have to be firm with your dog and should always be sure to follow through on commands.

Since they are not extremely active dogs, Chows do not eat a lot. You should feed your dog a nutritious puppy food while he is young and a good adult dog food when he grows older. While they are easy to feed, they do require quite a lot of grooming. Their thick coats are hard to brush because they are so dense.

While they are big dogs, Chow Chows should not spend too much time outside during the summer, since their thick coats do not protect Chows from heat sensitivity. These dogs also can suffer from hip dysplasia and often have problems with their knee joints.

If you don't mind that Chow Chows have a bit of an attitude problem when they are dealing with strangers or other animals, then this might just be the right breed for you. After all, there is nothing quite like hugging one of these fuzzy, bear like dogs on a chilly winter night.

Is a Cocker Spaniel Right for You?

The Cocker Spaniel is such a pretty, graceful dog in the show ring that it is hard to imagine that this breed was developed to be a working dog. However, before Cocker Spaniels were bred for their long, flowing coats, these bouncy little dogs were developed to be able to work tirelessly alongside hunters and sportsmen. Today, the spunky little Cocker has few of its former hunting instincts. Instead, this breed has become popular as a family pet.



Cocker Spaniels are small dogs and weigh in at twenty four to twenty nine pounds. They stand fifteen to sixteen inches tall. This breed is known for its feathery, long leg hair, its floppy ears, and its soulful dark eyes. The Cocker comes in a wide range of colors, including black, cream, roan, black and white, orange and white, tan tricolor, and black with tan points.

For several years, Cocker Spaniels were so popular that some breeders allowed dogs with bad temperaments to reproduce. The resulting puppies with bad traits were bred back to other dogs with bad traits. Suddenly, the Cocker Spaniel breed was filled with dogs who suffered from inexplicable episodes of rage or were extremely high strung. Luckily, breed enthusiasts stepped in to rescue the breed and have been breeding dogs with sound temperaments. Now, most Cockers are once again wonderful family pets and are good with children and other animals. To be sure you buy a Cocker Spaniel with a good temperament, only buy from a reputable breeder and make certain you meet both parents.

Since Cocker Spaniels are not high energy dogs, they do well in apartments, town houses, or single homes. However, your dog will still need to be exercised daily. If you have a child who likes to throw balls or sticks, your Cocker will be blissfully happy, since these dogs love to play fetch.

Although Cocker Spaniels are small enough to be easily controlled when they are full grown, it is still a good idea to train your dog. Puppy classes will help him learn to get along well with other dogs and people. These classes are also a good idea for new dog owners, since owners are actually learning alongside their dogs.

The Cocker Spaniel's coat requires a fair amount of grooming, especially if you want your dog to have that beautiful feathery leg hair. If you do not keep your Cocker's coat clipped short, be prepared to brush his coat at least three times a week. Keep a close eye on your dog's ears, since those hairy floppy ears don't always get enough air circulating to keep them healthy.

Cocker Spaniels have a bit of a reputation for being gluttonous. When feeding your dog, be sure you use proper portion sizes. You may also want to consider avoiding the use of treats as training rewards. The charming Cocker can suffer from other health problems besides obesity. They include hip dysplasia, bad knees, epilepsy, eye problems, heart disease and allergy problems.

If you want a small family dog with a playful spirit, then a Cocker Spaniel just may be the right breed for you.

So You Want a Collie

Almost every child wants to own Lassie, the wonder Collie. Unfortunately, if the child really expects one dog to be that incredible, a Collie puppy may be a bit of a disappointment. After all, in real life, Lassie is actually played by several hard working Collies.

The Collie was originally bred to herd sheep and still has a strong protective instinct, which makes the breed an excellent choice for a family dog. Of course, not every Collie is a highly

intelligent, diligent protector. Some of these dogs are high strung and nervous, but most are wonderful with children. The American Kennel Club classifies the Collie as part of the Herding Group. These dogs weigh 55 to 80 pounds and stand 22 to 26 inches tall.

The Collie is strong and graceful and has plenty of endurance. This dog's almond shaped eyes seem to sparkle with intelligence, whether they are brown or blue in color. The Collie's prick ears give it an alert appearance. The Collie can be rough or smooth coated. The rough coat is longer and fuller than the smooth coat. This breed can come in sable and white, tricolor, or blue merle colors.

The Collie enjoys living in the midst of an active family. This breed is not a good choice for apartment living, since it loves to spend time outside. A home with a large yard is ideal for the Collie breed.

Although the Collie is friendly and outgoing, this dog is protective of its family and takes its duties as a watchdog seriously. Your Collie will bark at intruders, whether they are people, cats, squirrels, or pieces of trash blowing around the yard.

The Collie can be quite headstrong and can get into quite a lot of mischief as a puppy. You should consider attending puppy obedience classes with your Collie, since it is easier to train a small puppy who hasn't developed bad habits than a sixty pound dog that has. Also, be sure to be firm with your puppy about staying on the floor if you do not want Collie hair on all of your furniture. Once you allow your dog on the furniture, he will feel that he has a right to be there any time you leave the room.

The Collie breed has very few health problems. Eye diseases and PRA are the most common problems these dogs face. In fact, you are much more likely to take your puppy to the veterinarian because he has injured himself while jumping from a moving vehicle or exploring his surroundings than you will for a health problem.

Collies are quite happy to pack away plenty of food. These dogs have a tendency to overeat, so it is best to give them three small meals a day. If your Collie develops a bulge around his middle, talk to your veterinarian about switching to a food that promotes weight loss.

Although a rough coated Collie has long hair, the Collie does not need extensive grooming. Brush through your dog's coat several times a week to avoid mats, paying close attention to the hair around his face, behind his ears, and around his legs.

The Collie is an intelligent family dog. If you want a dog who will protect your family and will play with the kids, the Collie may just be the perfect pet for you.

So You Want a Dalmation

With the popularity of the Disney cartoons featuring Dalmations, it is no wonder that this breed is in demand. However, few Dalmations act like the dogs in these movies, although Dalmation puppies can certainly get into plenty



of mischief, just as their cartoon counterparts can.

The Dalmation is a member of the American Kennel Club's Non-Sporting group. These dogs first arrived in England during the 1700's, where noblemen used them to guard their coaches. Dalmations were the ideal breed for this job, since they got along well with horses. In fact, Dalmations were so good with horses that they became popular with firemen, who used horse drawn fire wagons. By the time fire engines replaced the horse drawn wagons, Dalmations and fire stations were inseparable.

The Dalmation is a 45 to 65 pound dog that stands 19 to 24 inches in height. This dog is well muscled without being overly bulky or stocky. Its eyes can be brown, blue, or a combination of the two colors. The Dalmation's long, graceful tail is extremely powerful. The sleek coat of this breed has a background of white that is covered with black or brown colored spots. As new born puppies, Dalmations have no spots. They are pure white until their spots begin to appear.

Dalmations are extremely high energy dogs and are prone to hyperactive behavior and separation anxiety. You will need to be prepared to take your dog jogging or for a run in the park to burn off energy, as he may not burn off enough energy walking in the yard by himself. If possible, give your Dalmation a job to do. Obviously, not everyone has a horse in the back yard, but you can always teach your dog to fetch the morning paper.

Inexperienced dog owners may not be able to handle this wonderful breed, as Dalmations have a tendency to be a bit hard headed. If you buy a Dalmation puppy, be prepared to attend puppy obedience classes. Also, socialize your puppy as frequently as possible, as Dalmations tend to be fearful around people they don't know.

Since they are so active, Dalmations burn a lot of calories. You will need to feed your puppy a good puppy chow that has plenty of nutrition. Also, check with your veterinarian to see which vitamins and supplements you should give your dog. Also, ask about special diets that help reduce the chance of kidney or bladder stones, since this breed is prone to these problems. Dalmations are also prone to deafness, hip dysplasia and allergies.

Grooming a Dalmation is simple. Just brush your dog once a week to remove loose hair. If you don't groom your dog, you will spend quite a lot of time cleaning up his hair, as Dalmations can be heavy shedders.

If you love the look of the Dalmation's spotted coat and enjoy living an active lifestyle, then the Dalmation may just be the perfect breed for you.

Is a Doberman Pinscher Right For You?

Doberman Pinschers are a common sight in the movies. People are used to seeing people running for their lives as aggressive dogs lunge at them with demonic looking eyes. However, in real life, most Dobermans are actually loyal, intelligent family pets.

The American Kennel Club classifies the Doberman Pinscher as a member of its Working Group. These dogs were originally bred to be police dogs. They were also commonly used in the German military. The sight of one of these big, dangerous looking dogs coming toward them filled people with dread. After all, they are extremely powerful animals.

The Doberman Pinscher is a square dog with a powerful chest and a bullet shaped head. This breed weighs in at anywhere from 55 to 90 pounds and stands 24 to 28 inches tall. The Doberman's short coat is black, red, blue, or fawn with tan markings. Occasionally, these dogs have a white spot on their chests. Its almond shaped eyes are dark in color. Most Dobermans have their tails docked. While this may sound cruel, a docked tail can prevent painful accidents in the future. More than one undocked Doberman has accidentally broken his tail.

Dobermans are not high energy dogs, but they have amazing endurance capabilities. These dogs do need exercise and do not do well in apartment settings. A fenced yard is a much better fit for them. Dobermans enjoy spending time with their owners, so even if you have a fenced yard, you should be prepared to take your dog for a daily walk.

Despite the bad publicity this breed receives, most Dobermans are great with children and other pets. These devoted family dogs will do anything to please their owners and are highly trainable. However, you do need to be careful if you have young children and a Doberman puppy. Puppies can accidentally knock your children down, since they do not realize their own strength and are very energetic.

You will need to begin training and socializing your Doberman as soon as you bring him home to avoid problem behaviors. Dobermans are very intelligent and can get into quite a lot of mischief if they are left to themselves. Puppy obedience classes are a good idea, since the classes will help you train and socialize your puppy while he is young and easy to control. After all, who wants to wait until their dog weighs almost as much as they do before they try to teach him to sit.

Dobermans are big, muscular dogs and need a substantial amount of dog food. Be sure to feed your dog a food formulated for large breeds to be sure he gets the nutrition he needs.

Doberman Pinschers are prone to hypothyroidism and a hereditary condition called von Willebrand's disease. They also can develop heart problems. As they age, these oversized lap dogs are prone to becoming overweight, so you may want to check with your veterinarian to find out about special foods for older dogs.

It is easy to groom a Doberman. You may want to brush your dog once a week to remove dirt and loose hair and you should check his nails to be sure they are not too long, but they rarely need any further grooming.

Doberman Pinschers may look like hardened killers, but they are actually crème puffs around their family. If you want a dog that will protect your home but still loves to snuggle up beside you at night, then a Doberman may be the right breed for you.

So You Want a German Shepherd

Ever since Rin Tin Tin became a famous television personality, the German Shepherd has gone from an already popular dog breed to one of the most well known breeds on earth. This versatile dog breed seems to be everywhere that a dog can be of help, from war torn countries to areas where natural disasters have occurred. The powerful German Shepherd will strike terror in the hearts of criminals one minute and endure the overly affectionate attention of little children the next.

German Shepherds were bred to be guardians and the breed still has a very strong protective instinct. A dog that is high strung or nervous should never be bred, as the resulting puppies can be untrustworthy. However, most German Shepherds are wonderful dogs and devoted to their families, including children and other pets.

The German Shepherd is a fairly large dog, weighing from sixty to seventy five pounds and standing twenty two to twenty six inches tall. This breed has erect ears, dark, intelligent eyes, and a graceful tail. The German Shepherd is most commonly black and tan, although gray and tan or black and gray dogs are also available. A striking all white dog, commonly called an Alsatian, is popular with many people. If you like the look of the Alsatian, be sure you meet the puppy's parents, as these white German Shepherds can sometimes be a bit high strung.

Although German Shepherds are high energy animals, they can live in the city. Just be aware that you will have to exercise your dog frequently and that he will be miserable if you leave him alone for long hours without giving him a job to do. Of course, a house with a big yard in a rural area is ideal.

Since your German Shepherd will rapidly grow into a big, powerful dog, you may want to enroll him in obedience classes while he is a puppy. It is much easier to control a small puppy than a full grown untrained dog. In addition, puppy obedience classes also help provide another important benefit for your German Shepherd puppy, socialization to other dogs and people. Many people who own these intelligent dogs make the unfortunate mistake of thinking that their dogs need to be trained as guard dogs. However, this training can lead to aggression if your dog is not trained properly. Since German Shepherds are naturally protective, they do not need attack dog training to guard your home.

The German Shepherd's coat requires little grooming. The dense coat is coarse and does not mat easily. Brush your dog once a week to remove dirt and debris. If you live in the city, concrete will probably wear down your Shepherd's nails. However, if your dog lives in a rural area he may need to have his nails trimmed several times a year.

German Shepherds need to eat a nutritional food that is formulated for large breed dogs. If your Shepherd is a working dog, you may need to feed him a high protein food. A good dog vitamin is also a smart idea.

This loyal, smart breed commonly suffers from hip dysplasia or epilepsy. To see one of these dignified dogs suffering from either disease is heart breaking. Please be sure that your puppy's breeder has had the parents tested to be sure they do not carry these diseases.

If you want a dog who will be protective and loyal, then a German Shepherd may be the right dog for you and your family.

Is a Golden Retriever the Right Breed for You?

So, you read THE WATCHER a dozen times, you've seen Golden Retrievers working as guide dogs, and now you want to buy a Golden Retriever puppy of your own. However, before you bring one of these cuddly yellow fuzz balls home, you need to be sure a Golden Retriever is really the right dog for you and your family.



The Golden Retriever is a big, muscular dog, weighing in at 55 to 75 pounds and standing 21 ½ to 24 inches tall at the shoulder. This dog breed has a broad skull, which may be why Golden Retrievers are so intelligent. Coat colors range from a deep, honey colored gold to a light gold that is almost white. The palest gold or darkest gold colors are considered to be undesirable, as are any white patches or markings.

Did you know that Golden Retrievers were originally bred to be working dogs? They are members of the Sporting Group. These dogs are high energy animals and need plenty of exercise, especially while they are less than three years of age. This desire to stay busy is one reason that Golden Retrievers make good rescue, Seeing Eye, or drug sniffing dogs. If you do not keep them occupied, they will find ways to amuse themselves, such as eating your entire shoe collection.

If you are an avid gardener, you will need to be sure you have a separate area where you can contain your dog, since most Golden Retrievers love to dig. While they are going through their puppy stage, they are also prone to chewing up shrubs.

Since Golden Retrievers are large dogs, you may want to consider the cost of food before buying your puppy. These dogs eat a lot. Also, since Golden Retrievers are prone to hip dysplasia, you may want to ask your veterinarian about feeding your puppy food that is especially formulated to help large breeds grow properly.

If you have small children, you may need to consider whether a Golden Retriever puppy will be too boisterous for them. Although adult Goldens are excellent family dogs, puppies can be quite mouthy and rowdy. They may accidentally knock toddlers down while they are playing.

If you do buy a puppy when you have small children, you will need to find time to teach him good manners quickly. You may want to attend obedience classes with him, so that he is used to other dogs and people and learns how to act when he is outside the house. Training your puppy before he is too strong for you to control easily is a good idea.

Golden Retrievers need frequent grooming to keep their coats from tangling. You will need to pay special attention to the area behind your dog's ears, as it is prone to developing large mats. Frequent grooming will also help you alleviate dog hair on furniture, which can be quite heavy

when your dog is shedding his coat. In addition, you will need to have enough time to check your dog for ticks after he goes for a romp in the park or other grassy and wooded areas.

If you still feel that this is the breed for you, be sure to look for a good breeder to buy your puppy from. A healthy, good tempered Golden Retriever makes a wonderful, intelligent companion.

Is a Greyhound Right For You?

The Greyhound is a breed with the tragic ability to run fast. Many Greyhound owners use their dogs to compete in races and put them down when they loose too many races. However, these dogs can also be wonderful pets and many of them are rehabilitated by Greyhound rescues.

Before you open your heart and home to a displaced Greyhound, you should talk to the rescue about the problems new dog owners face. Racing Greyhounds are trained to chase down a mechanical rabbit. Unfortunately, they don't always differentiate between a rabbit and a small dog or cat. They do better as single pets. In addition, these dogs are already full grown, but are not potty trained and do not have any idea of household etiquette.

The Greyhound is classified as a member of the Hound Group by the American Kennel Club. These dogs first appeared in ancient Egypt, where they were used to run down prey. When they came to England, they became common with British noblemen, who began racing them. Greyhounds traveled to America, where their owners continued this popular sport.

Greyhounds are large, powerfully built dogs. They have long legs and narrow bodies. These dogs are all muscle. Greyhounds have dark eyes and a long, graceful tail. Unlike many other breeds, a Greyhound can be any color.

Greyhounds are capable of developing an incredible speed, but they are not actually high energy dogs. In between races, these dogs are couch potatoes, conserving their energy for the next chase. They need a fenced yard so they have room to run, although dogs that live in apartments adapt to walking on a leash without too much trouble.

Greyhounds are friendly, sociable dogs. They love to spend time with their family and are very playful. They like nothing better than snuggling up on the couch beside their owners all evening long. Greyhounds enjoy playing with children and are very gentle with them. They also play well with other dogs. You will need to keep a close eye on your dog if you have other pets, since the prey instinct may be too hard to resist.

Greyhounds need plenty of fuel for their bodies. You will need to feed your dog a high quality dog food. However, since these dogs are prone to bloat, do not allow your dog to overeat. Several small meals are better for his health than one large meal. Consult your veterinarian to find out how much you should feed your dog at each meal. A good vitamin supplement is also a good idea for these dogs.

Grooming a Greyhound is simple, since these dogs have a short, sleek coat that does not shed heavily. Brushing your Greyhound once a week should be sufficient. You may also want to trim his nails if they are tapping on the floor when he walks.

Owning one of these dogs can be overwhelming at first. However, if you are willing to persevere, you can end up with a wonderful, devoted family pet for many years to come.

Should You Buy a Jack Russell Terrier?

Jack Russell Terriers are feisty, energetic dogs that gained popularity with the advent of the Wishbone series. However, in real life, these dogs are not exactly like the famous Wishbone. This dog breed is all terrier, and sometimes a Jack Russell's temperament can be overwhelming for inexperienced dog owners.

The Jack Russell Terrier is also called the Parson Russell Terrier, because this breed was created by a parson – Reverend Jack Russell. He bred these dogs to chase down foxes. He wanted the dogs to be small enough to fit into the space the fox was hiding in, so he kept them small.

The Jack Russell Terrier is a member of the American Kennel Club's Terrier Group. However, the AKC calls these dogs Parson's Russell Terriers to differentiate them from British Jack Russells. This is necessary because the AKC feels that these dogs should have long legs, while British breeders prefer dogs with shorter legs.

Jack Russell Terriers are small, but strong dogs. Their dark almond shaped eyes have a bright eyed, alert appearance. While most Jack Russells have short coats, there are rough coated dogs, as well. These dogs always are more than half white. The rest of their body has a combination of tan, black and brown markings. The short tail of the Jack Russell Terrier is carried straight up, but is rarely still, as this breed is almost always enthusiastically wagging its tail over something. These dogs weigh in at 13 to 17 pounds and stand 10 to 15 inches tall.

The Jack Russell Terrier is a very high energy dog. Despite its small size, this dog does not do well in apartments or small spaces. This dog thinks it is much larger than it really is and will work until it wears out. A Jack Russell needs a securely fenced yard. Jack Russells will go over, under, and around obstacles to escape when they are bored. They will even climb trees.

Jack Russells enjoy living in the midst of an active family, as long as they aren't overlooked in the bustle of family life. They love plenty of attention and thrive on playing games with children, such as chasing down and retrieving balls.

You should make sure you don't neglect obedience training because of the Jack Russell's small size. These dogs need the structure that commands provide. Puppy classes will also help you socialize your puppy, so he learns to play well with other dogs.

Jack Russells can suffer from eye and ear problems, including deafness. However, overall, this is a healthy breed.

Feeding a Jack Russell is not too expensive, as these dogs do not eat large quantities of food. However, if your dog becomes hyper, you may want to consult your veterinarian about using a lower protein food.

Smooth coated Jack Russells need very little grooming. However, rough coated dogs should be groomed at least once a week. Be sure to check regularly your dog's nails to be sure they aren't too long.

The Jack Russell can be a fun family pet. As long as your family isn't filled with couch potatoes, the Jack Russell may be the perfect breed for you.

Is a Labrador Retriever the Right Breed for You?

If you want a dog that has a bubbly personality and a strong desire to make you happy, you may want to consider buying a Labrador Retriever. Of course, these big, exuberant dogs aren't for everyone. Before you buy one of these roly-poly little puppies, you may want to consider some of the plusses and minuses of the breed.



The Labrador Retriever is a powerful, dependable dog. This breed weighs from 55 to 80 pounds and stand 21 to 24 ½ inches tall at the shoulder. These dogs have quite a lot of stamina and can work or play for hours on end. Labs are known for their soft chocolate brown eyes and thick, rounded tail. Their coats can be black, yellow or chocolate, with black Labs being most commonly available. The dense hair of the Labrador Retriever's coat is almost waterproof.

Labrador Retrievers are classified as part of the American Kennel Club's Sporting Group. These dogs were bred to spend hours retrieving game from areas that hunters had trouble getting in to. Labs usually enjoy the water, which makes them ideal boating or fishing companions.

These dogs require plenty of exercise, especially when they are young and full of energy. They do not make good apartment dogs, as they require plenty of room to run and play. A home with a fenced yard is the ideal situation for a Lab. Even if he has space to play, he may need to go for a daily walk or romp in the park to burn off some energy.

Since Labrador Retrievers are high energy dogs with plenty of muscle, they eat quite a bit of food. While your puppy is growing up, you may want to feed it food that is especially formulated to help large breed dogs develop healthy bones. If you are planning to use your Lab as a hunting dog, you will need to buy dog food that contains plenty of protein.

Most Labrador Retrievers make excellent family dogs and love being around children. However, some Labs do not have good temperaments, so, if it is at all possible, be sure you meet both parents before buying a puppy. If your children are still small, you may want to wait until they are steady on their feet before buying a Lab puppy. These dogs can knock toddlers over just by wagging their powerful tails.

Since Labs are such big dogs, it is important to start training your puppy at eight to twelve weeks of age. Be sure you work with your puppy to keep it from jumping up, as a full grown Lab can bowl people over with an enthusiastic greeting. You may want to take puppy obedience classes to socialize him and get some training help, as Labs can be a bit head strong at times.

Labrador Retrievers need very little grooming. You should brush your dog once a week to remove loose hair and dirt. Also, you will need to trim his nails when they grow too long. Finally, you will have to check for ticks after your dog has been playing outdoors.

If you want a friendly dog who is eager to please and don't mind some occasional stubbornness, then a Labrador Retriever may very well be the perfect breed for you.

Should You Buy a Miniature Pinscher?

If you love the sleek, muscled appearance of the Doberman Pinscher, but you don't want a big dog, you may want to consider a Miniature Pinscher. These dogs are very similar in appearance to Dobermans, but are almost one hundred pounds lighter.

The Miniature Pinscher may look like a miniature Doberman, but these dogs are not actually directly related. In fact, the Miniature Pinscher was developed long before the Doberman. The Miniature Pinscher was created by breeding the German Pinscher to a smaller breed. The American Kennel Club classifies the Miniature Pinscher as a part of the Toy Group, but these dogs are not cute little lapdogs. The Miniature Pinscher was bred to be a tough, aggressive ratter. The Min Pin weighs in at 8 to 10 pounds and stands 10 to 12 inches high.

Miniature Pinschers have a compact, muscular frame. Their intelligent eyes are so dark brown that they look black. The Min Pin's short coat can be red, stag red, black and rust, or chocolate and rust. This breed's tails are docked. In addition, some people crop their Miniature Pinscher's ears, but this is not necessary. Most of these dogs develop pricked ears as they mature.

The high energy Miniature Pinscher does well in apartment settings, as long as you are willing to go for a long walk once a day. Of course, the Min Pin also enjoys the freedom of a fenced yard. These dogs have a tendency to roam and they will search for ways to escape, so be sure your yard has a securely fenced exercise area. If you live in an area with busy streets, your dog's escape could prove fatal, since the Miniature Pinscher is too small to be easily seen from a moving car.

Miniature Pinschers are very loyal dogs, and are deeply devoted to their owners, but that loyalty does not always extend to small children. This breed has a tendency to be nippy with babies and toddlers. If you have family members with children who visit frequently, you may want to crate your dog while your guests are there to avoid problems. In addition, some of these dogs are quite high strung and will become aggressive to adults, especially mail carriers and deliverymen.

While Miniature Pinschers are small, most of them are a bit stubborn and hard to control. Your puppy should attend obedience classes and you should be careful to follow up on every

command. These dogs enjoy agility training and attending competitions gives them a chance to shine. The Min Pin was bred to work and takes vermin seriously. If a mouse gets into your house, your dog will not rest until it is caught.

Miniature Pinschers can have several serious health problems, such as heart conditions, thyroid conditions, and epilepsy. In addition, these dogs are prone to hip dysplasia, which is a rare thing in small breeds.

Miniature Pinschers do not consume huge quantities of food, but they have a tendency to be a bit gluttonous. You may need to switch to a food that controls weight gain if you notice your sleek Miniature Pinscher is starting to resemble a blowfish with legs.

Min Pins require little grooming, but they do have problems with overgrown nails. Be sure to check your dog's nails frequently.

The Miniature Pinscher is not for everyone, but if you want a dog who is completely loyal to you, you may want to consider this breed.

Should You Buy a Newfoundland?

If you are looking for a family dog that will devote himself to keeping your children from getting into trouble, you may want to buy a Newfoundland. These massive dogs have an innate desire to rescue people who are in danger and have an incredibly sweet and gentle nature. However, before you buy a Newfoundland puppy, you should consider whether you can care for such a large dog.

The Newfoundland is a large, solid dog, weighing in at 100 to 150 pounds. These gentle giants stand 26 to 28 inches tall at the shoulder. A Newfoundland is known for its waterproof double coat, which comes in black, brown, gray, or black and white. Most dogs have deep chocolate brown eyes, but a few have light brown eyes, instead.

The American Kennel Club considers Newfoundlands to be part of the Working Group. These dogs excel in rescue situations and were often owned by lighthouse keepers. Their thick, water repellent double coat and large size combine to make them the ideal dog breed to help with sea rescues.

The sheer size of the Newfoundland makes it a bad choice for apartments or homes with small rooms. However, these dogs are not high strung and do not need excessive amounts of exercise. A fenced yard is usually sufficient. Of course, they still enjoy taking a leisurely evening stroll with their owners.

A Newfoundland must have an excellent temperament to be considered a representative of the breed. Because of their enormous size, these dogs do need to be trained not to jump up as puppies so they do not bowl children over. However, they seem to have an instinctive understanding of how fragile small children and animals are and usually are very careful to avoid injuring them. Newfoundlands will sit regally surveying the world around them, until a

child or another dog wants to play. Then, they will happily lose all dignity to romp with their friends.

Because they are so large, Newfoundlands should receive obedience training as puppies. Even though they enjoy pleasing their owners, their sheer size and strength can make training a six month old Newfoundland challenging. Since these dogs enjoy learning and socializing with the other puppies in the class, puppy obedience should be an enjoyable experience.

Any dog weighing in at over 100 pounds eats a lot so be prepared for an increase in your grocery bill if you buy a Newfoundland. Be sure to talk to your veterinarian about your puppy's nutritional needs, as these big dogs will need the right vitamins and other nutrients to develop strong bones.

Despite the breed's long hair, grooming a Newfoundland is not too time consuming. The coarse hair of the top coat does not mat easily. As long as you can put aside time at least once a week to brush your dog, you should be able to keep his coat looking great. You should also plan to check his nails at least once a month to be sure they do not need to be trimmed.

If you can't imagine having a dog the size of a small pony, than a Newfoundland may not be the right breed for you. However, if you don't mind the large size of this breed, you will have a loyal and devoted companion for many years to come.

Is the Lovable Pug the Right Breed for You?

If you've seen Men In Black or Milo and Otis, you probably have fallen in love with the charming Pugs who acted in these movies. While the distinctive appearance of this breed may be the first thing that attracts people to the Pug, it is the Pug's personality that wins the lifelong devotion of dog fanciers.

The American Kennel Club classifies the Pug as a member of the Toy Group. Pugs weigh in at fourteen to eighteen pounds. Their distinctive squashed face and curly tails gives them a slightly pig like appearance. Pugs come in silver, black, or beige colors with a black mask. They have broad chests and are very muscular despite their small size.

Pugs have a reputation for being so good natured that people can literally walk on them. However, don't let this breed's laid back attitude fool you. This dog will turn from a lover to a fighter in an instant if an intruder threatens his human. Pugs are wonderful with children and other pets. In fact, Pugs have been known to perform feats such as gently carrying an escaped parakeet to his owner without disturbing even a feather. However, Pugs are more likely to cause allergies than some other breeds. Pugs and children with allergy induced asthma are not a good combination.

Pugs are perfectly content to live in apartments or town homes. Although the Pug doesn't require a lot of exercise, you should be sure he stays in shape to keep him healthy. A daily walk around the block should be enough exercise, but he will be happy to walk much further, as

well. Just be sure that you use a harness on your Pug instead of a collar, as these dogs don't need to develop problems with their windpipes, since they already have pushed in noses.

While Pugs can learn obedience, these little guys aren't the fastest learners. Your Pug may not learn to sit or heel as fast as other breeds. However, once he learns he will be extremely proud of himself. You may want to try attending puppy obedience classes with your Pug. If he just can't grasp the commands, try again when he is a few months older.

Pugs love food. They are happy to eat whatever you give them and will learn undignified tricks if you reward them with treats. You should make every effort to limit your Pug's food intake, since these dogs can suffer from knee problems, which grow worse if the dog is overweight. Pugs can also suffer from Demodectic mange and frequently receive eye injuries.

If you want a dog breed that does not need much grooming, a Pug is ideal. Just brush through your dog's coat once a week to remove loose hair and dirt. You also should keep an eye on his face wrinkles to be sure the creases do not begin to smell or develop bacteria.

If you want a dog breed that is all heart and you don't mind him snoring and snorting in your ear all night, then a Pug may be the perfect choice for you.

Is a Rottweiler the Right Breed for You?

Do you need a protective dog that is intelligent and devoted to its owners? If so, you may want to consider buying a Rottweiler. These big dogs were bred to be very versatile working dogs. They guard their homes and families, excel in agility training, and think that they are tiny lapdogs when they are with their owners.

The Rottweiler is fairly large and very muscular. These powerful dogs weigh between 85 to 130 pounds and stand 22 to 27 inches tall at the shoulder. A Rottweiler has a sleek black and brown coat and deep, soulful brown eyes.

The Rottweiler is a part of the American Kennel Club's Working Group. These powerful dogs are often used as guard dogs. Unfortunately, some Rottweiler owners have mistreated their dogs in an attempt to make them more aggressive. These abused Rottweilers have given the breed an undeserved reputation as a dangerous breed. Rottweilers that are bred and raised properly are actually wonderful, loving family pets.

Rottweilers are not the best breed for an apartment. These dogs are big and powerful and they need room to run. Ideally, Rottweiler owners should own a home with a fenced yard. If you do not have a fenced yard, you should be prepared to take your dog for frequent runs in the park to burn off excess energy.

The Rottweiler is an extremely intelligent dog and this breed does best when it has something to do. Give your Rottweiler a job, such as keeping pests out of the garden, and you will have a happy dog. It is important to begin training a Rottweiler puppy at a young age, as these dogs quickly grow into large, powerful animals. Also, puppy obedience classes are a wonderful

opportunity for you to provide your Rottweiler with plenty of socialization at a young age. Luckily, this breed enjoys learning, as long as the trainer uses love and patience. These dogs respond eagerly to new challenges, which is why the Rottweiler does well in agility trials.

Because of their size and strength, Rottweilers may not be the best choice for a family with a toddler. A six month old puppy may not realize his own strength and could accidentally injure small children while he is romping around. If your heart is set on a Rottweiler puppy, you may want to wait until your children are old enough to walk well.

Of course, a dog with the size and energy of a Rottweiler can burn up quite a few calories. You should be prepared to buy quite a lot of food for your puppy. Also, it is important to make sure that your puppy's nutritional needs are being met, since Rottweilers can develop joint problems when they are older.

Since a Rottweiler has such a short coat, grooming one of these dogs is not very time consuming. Brush your dog once a week with a slicker brush to keep his coat looking shiny and glossy. Also, be sure you take the time to check his nails to be sure they become not too long. When your dog is a puppy, you may also want to accustom him to having his teeth brushed.

If the thought of having a hundred pound dog attempt to crawl into your lap as though he weighs ten pounds horrifies you, then a Rottweiler may not be the breed for you. After all, not everyone wants a dog who has the appearance of a killer and the heart of a marshmallow.

A Look at the Saint Bernard

More than one traveler stranded in the snowy Swiss Alps owes the ponderous Saint Bernard his life. Monks in the Alps actually developed this massive dog to be used as a rescue dog. The Saint Bernard breed is quite an old one, going back as far as the 1700s.

The American Kennel Club places the Saint Bernard in the Working Group. These big dogs weigh from one hundred twenty to two hundred pounds and stand twenty six to twenty eight inches tall. This breed can be short haired or it can have a long haired coat. Originally, all Saint Bernards had a short haired coat, since snow did not stick to the short hair easily. However, when these dogs became popular as pets in Victorian England, Saint Bernard fanciers bred them to have longer hair. They also worked to make them bigger and bigger.

Unfortunately, some breeders today still are more concerned with appearance than they are with personality. Before buying a puppy, make sure that your prospective Saint Bernard's parents are outgoing and sweet tempered dogs. Otherwise, you may end up with a fearful or aggressive dog. Please don't underestimate the importance of choosing a puppy with a good temperament.

The Saint Bernard is usually a gentle giant and plays well with children and other dogs. However, a young Saint Bernard and small children is usually a bad combination, since these dogs make awkward, clumsy puppies. More than one toddler has been accidentally knocked

down and injured when trying to play with a Saint Bernard puppy. Older dogs are usually more graceful and are careful not to knock children down.

The Saint Bernard does not do well in apartments or town homes. These dogs need a lot of room and are not happy without a home that has a fenced yard. If they do not have enough exercise, Saint Bernards tend to get into a lot of trouble. A bored puppy of this size can sure make a lot of damage.

Saint Bernards are loyal, loving dogs with a strong desire to please. However, their enormous size means that they can be hard to control. You may want to consider enrolling your puppy in obedience classes while you still outweigh him. These classes will help you train him, but they also play another important role, socializing your puppy. He will meet plenty of strangers and their dogs in the classes.

Saint Bernards eat a sizable amount of food, so it is no surprise that feeding a Saint Bernard increases the grocery bill. Since this breed suffers from hip dysplasia, you may want to use a food that is formulated to help large breed puppies grow healthy and strong. Saint Bernards are also prone to heart disease and tumors.

Short haired Saint Bernards need very little grooming. Even long haired dogs don't require too much work, since they are not heavy matters. Just be sure you brush through your dog's hair once a week.

The Saint Bernard is a wonderful companion dog. As long as you don't mind having a dog who is bigger than most people, a Saint Bernard may be the right choice for you.

Is a Siberian Husky Right for You?

Are you looking for a dog who is very active but still loves the company of people? If so, you may want to consider the Siberian Husky. This beautiful dog was bred to tirelessly pull sleds loaded with supplies over frozen terrain for miles on end. At the end of the day, Huskies provide companionship to their owners.

The Siberian Husky is classified as a part of the Working Group by the American Kennel Club. Like most dogs in this group, the Husky must have a job to do to keep him from getting into trouble. These dogs are less domesticated than many other dog breeds and are actually quite wolf like. The Husky is a thirty five to sixty pound dog that stands twenty to twenty four inches tall.

These high energy dogs have a very thick coat made up of two distinct layers. Huskies have prick ears and a wolf like face. This breed's coat comes in a variety of colors, although most Huskies have black and white or silver and white coats. The most striking feature of the Husky is his almond shaped blue or brown eyes.

The Siberian Husky is a very impulsive dog and can get into more scrapes and dangerous situations than almost any other type of dog. More than one Husky visits the veterinarian's

office to be patched up on a routine basis. These dogs are usually good with older children, but may not be the best choice for families with infants or toddlers. Huskies have a reputation for being aggressive towards cats or small animals and may not be trustworthy with smaller children.

Since the Husky is so energetic, this breed does not do well in apartments or homes with small yards. In fact, Huskies often prefer to spend most of their time outdoors during the colder months, since their heavy coats make indoor temperatures uncomfortable. Just be sure that your yard is securely fenced, as these dogs have Houdini like tendencies.

It is important that you train your dog thoroughly, since the Siberian Husky is constantly looking for signs of weakness. You may want to attend obedience classes with your puppy to get some help in training him. If you do not maintain a dominant position, your dog will become a nightmare to own. Huskies are best for experienced dog owners.

Siberian Huskies can eat a lot, although some of these dogs do not eat well when they become nervous and high strung. Of course, other Huskies eat everything, including the house siding.

Siberian Huskies should be groomed once a week to remove dirt and debris. Of course, when your dog is shedding his coat, you may want to groom him more frequently.

Overall, Huskies are fairly healthy. The majority of the Husky's health problems are accident related, although this breed can suffer from hip dysplasia and hypothyroidism.

If you don't mind owning a dog who will constantly keep you on your toes, then you may want to consider the beautiful Siberian Husky.

So You Want a Standard Poodle

Some people take one look at the fluffy, immaculately groomed Standard Poodles in the show ring and discount them as silly, shallow dogs. However, the Standard Poodle is considered by many people to be the most intelligent breed in the world, with the reasoning ability of a three year old child.



These dogs may look like lightweights in the show ring, but they were originally bred to work hard in the water. The Standard Poodle spent hours retrieving water fowl for hunters and the breed's dense coat helped protect it from the cold, damp working conditions. Because the breed is not commonly used as a working dog today, The American Kennel Club classifies the Standard Poodle as part of the Non-Sporting Group. These dogs weigh 45 to 70 pounds and stand over 15 inches tall.

The Standard Poodle has a muscular body under all of that hair. Its ears are long and fold over close to the head and its eyes are dark brown and filled with intelligence. This dog's tail is docked and stands erect. The tail should not curve over the dog's back. The Standard Poodle comes in a wide range of colors, including apricot, black, cream, red, blue, gray, silver, brown,

parti-color, and white. Overall, the white and cream colored Standard Poodles seem to be a bit more high strung and nervous than other colors, while black Standard Poodles seem calmer.

The Standard Poodle does best in family settings and is extremely devoted to its family's children. This breed also is an excellent choice for families with more than one dog, as the Standard Poodle rarely meets a dog it doesn't like. If you have a cat, be prepared for your dog to rampage through the house as he gives chase, although when he finally catches up to the cat, he will just want to play.

If you live in an apartment, your dog will need to take a long walk or go for a romp in the park every day. These dogs can live in apartments, but do much better in a home with a fenced yard.

Because of its high intelligence, this breed enjoys learning and should attend puppy obedience classes. In addition, Standard Poodles need to be socialized as puppies, or their natural aloofness with strangers can turn to fear. Your puppy will work hard during classes, because he will want to please you. If he can't figure out what you want him to do, he will wrinkle his brow and try again. If he still can't figure it out, he may start to get depressed and frustrated. If this happens, give him a command that he already knows and after he joyously obeys he will be ready to try to learn the new command again. Many Standard Poodles and their owners go on to take advanced classes so that they can compete in obedience and agility trials.

The Standard Poodle breed has several common health problems. Addison's disease, hip dysplasia, and epilepsy problems are prevalent enough that many breeders actually screen their parent dogs to be sure they don't carry these genetic faults. Your dog could also suffer from renal disease, bloat, and skin problems.

Standard Poodles are big dogs and have big appetites. If you've never had a big dog before, be prepared for a noticeable increase in the grocery budget. These dogs also should receive a daily vitamin. In addition, ask your veterinarian about giving your poodle a daily vitamin C tablet, which many veterinarians say can help decrease the chance of hip dysplasia.

If you do not want to spend time grooming a dog, don't buy a Standard Poodle. These dogs need to be brushed daily, and, with their large size, it can take an hour or more to thoroughly brush out a Standard Poodle's coat. Also, you will have to learn to cut your poodle's hair or you will need to take him to a professional groomer every six weeks.

The Standard Poodle is a fun loving, intelligent dog. If you don't mind brushing your dog instead of watching the news, this may be the breed for you.

Is a Yorkshire Terrier Right for You?

If you like small dogs with big dog attitudes, you may want to consider a Yorkshire Terrier. These dogs are so sure that they are just as big and bad as the other guy, that they will not hesitate to take on a Great Dane. Of course, this doesn't mean that Yorkshire Terriers aren't lap dogs. The Yorkie can cuddle with the best of them.

The Yorkshire Terrier is a member of the American Kennel Club's Toy Group. In the show ring, a Yorkie seems to glide across the ground, since the dog's long, flowing coat hides its tiny feet. Although Yorkies can be as small as one pound, most breeders do not recommend trying to breed dogs this tiny, and for good reason. When dogs are bred to be this tiny, health is often sacrificed for size and weight. The AKC calls for the Yorkie to be under seven pounds, but does not have a minimum required weight.

Yorkshire Terriers have long flowing coats of silver, blue or black hair, with tan on their heads and legs. Yorkie puppies are all born with black and tan coloring. This breed has dark, intelligent eyes.

The Yorkshire Terrier is an ideal apartment dog. Of course, your Yorkie would enjoy having a yard to romp in, but he can survive without it. In fact, some Yorkshire Terriers do not go out at all. These dogs are litter trained, instead. If you do not take your Yorkie for daily walks, you should look for ways to help him get some exercise, such as playing an indoor game of fetch. If you do have a yard, be sure that there are no gaps under the fence, as Yorkies love to explore. Since these dogs are so small and cute, a Yorkshire Terrier doesn't always have a chance to get back home before a passerby takes the little dog home, thinking it is lost or abandoned.

Yorkshire Terriers are sociable little dogs and enjoy being in the midst of all the activity and bustle of family life. However, these dogs are not a good choice for families with toddlers. This is not because Yorkies are untrustworthy with children, but because they are delicate little dogs and can be easily injured. A Yorkshire Terrier with a good temperament will allow children to squeeze, poke and pull on him, but it is unfair to subject a little dog to that treatment.

Despite the fact that a Yorkie is small, you should still take your puppy to obedience classes. These little guys have a tendency to become stubborn and set in their ways without proper training. Also, obedience training may save your Yorkshire Terrier's life if you are able to call him back to you if he escapes out the front door.

Yorkshire Terriers have few serious health problems. They do often have dental problems, such as retained baby teeth. Other problems these little guys can have are hernias and hypoglycemia.

Food for your Yorkshire Terrier will probably be your smallest expense. These little dogs don't eat much. However, you will have to be careful that you don't spoil your puppy with soft food or he may refuse to eat dry food, which will help you keep his teeth in better shape.

Most Yorkies should be groomed at least three times a week to keep their hair from matting. Dogs with silkier coats may only need to be groomed once a week. Also, since Yorkies are prone to dental problems, you should brush your dog's teeth several times a week.

If you want a pocket sized dog with plenty of spunk, then a Yorkie may be the perfect breed for you.

How to Become a Dog Breeder

If you are a dog lover who has a special place in your heart for one particular dog breed, you may decide to devote yourself to bettering that breed. Many times, this involves working with dogs from a particular bloodline to try to create specific traits that will be passed down through future generations. However, many people are uncertain about how to go about breeding dogs.

To be a dog breeder, all you need to do is own an un-neutered female dog or two. In most states, you do not need to even register your kennel if you only have two or three adult dogs. However, being a good dog breeder is more complicated.

First, a good dog breeder will not want to use dogs with major flaws. The breeder may show the dogs to try to obtain a championship before breeding them. This raises the value of the dog's future puppies, but it also enables the breeder to network with the people who know the most about the breed. Even if your dog does not get a championship, a few wins will make dog exhibitors take you more seriously. This is important because if one of these exhibitors has a dog that has traits that would balance out any of your dogs flaws, you have a good chance of breeding the two dogs to make show quality puppies.

If you are going to breed dogs for many years to come, you may want to choose a kennel name. You should register your kennel name with the American Kennel Club. Most breeders with a kennel name require any of the puppies they produce to carry this kennel name, since this is an excellent form of promotion and advertising for that kennel.

Even if your state does not require it for one or two dogs, you may also want to get a kennel permit. After all, you will want to keep a few puppies to continue your bloodline and will eventually need a permit. It is better to get the permit before you become attached to your puppies than to try to get one after you have more dogs, since neighbor's objections can cause the state to refuse to give you the permit.

When you breed your dog for the first time, you should look for a male dog that belongs to an experienced dog breeder. Not all dogs fall in love at first sight, and you only have a few days to successfully breed a dog before it goes out of heat. An experienced breeder knows how to introduce the dogs to each other and how to help them breed successfully.

Once your dog has been bred, you will need to take her to the veterinarian for at least one pre-natal visit. Your vet will let you know if you need to come more often. If you want to know how many puppies to expect, the vet can make a guess by feeling your dog's belly or you can find out exactly how many puppies there are with an x-ray. Be sure to ask your vet ahead of time about the birthing process and how you should prepare. Some dog breeds must deliver by C-section, while others rarely have problems. Don't forget to ask for pre-natal vitamins to keep your dog healthy.

As the delivery day grows near, prepare a quiet spot for your dog to deliver. You will want to have a whelping box, clean rags, a heating pad and the vet's emergency number on hand. You can buy a whelping box, but it is easy to make one of your own. The important thing is to be sure you put a small ledge in the box a few inches from the bottom to avoid having your dog accidentally crushing the babies between her body and the box sides.

Once you see those adorable puppies crawling around, you will realize that the hard part is still to come. After all, soon you are going to have to send some of those little fuzz balls off to new homes.

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