

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT DOG - ADVICE BY AMY

Use this questionnaire to: 1) privately review your personal situation; and 2) share your **specific** "dog requirements" with Amy to help her ensure the best fit.

Adopting the right dog is a decision that is more important than you think. Just go to any animal shelter to see the countless homeless dogs that ended up there because they were a mismatch for their adopting families or their families did not anticipate the level of responsibility needed to care for a dog. To avoid adding to the existing problem of homeless pets, think through your decision to adopt a dog and make sure you pick the right dog for your household.



PERSONAL SITUATION: SELF-REFLECTION

- Do I have the financial resources to support a dog and his/her needs including: 1) nutritious dog food; 2) veterinary visits, prescriptions, medical care and general medications including flea, tick and heartworm treatments; and 3) dog supplies including crates, bedding, food and water bowls, leashes, toys, shampoo, car travel equipment/space?

NOTE: According to *Money's*, "We did the Math: Here's How Much Your Dog Costs You Over its Lifetime", dog ownership costs the following annually: \$1,001 for a small dog; \$1,214 for a medium-sized dog, \$1,448 for a large dog.

- Are my household family members just as excited and supportive about adopting a dog as I am? How do I know one way or the other?
- Do I have any family members within my household who might be concerned about dog adoption because: 1) they're elderly and fearful of a dog inadvertently injuring them (ex: tripping them); 2) have dog allergies; 3) have a fear of dogs; and/or 4) other?

DOG REQUIREMENTS: SHARE WITH AMY

- Am I committed to the dog living in my home as a valued family member vs. living alone, outside?
 - Yes
 - No
- What size dog appeals to me the most?
 - Tiny (up to 11 pounds)
 - Small (12-22 pounds)
 - Medium (23-44 pounds)
 - Large (45-88 pounds)
 - Extra large (89-140 pounds+)
 - Flexible
- What age dog appeals to me the most? **NOTE:** age does not guarantee whether a dog is housebroken or not.
 - Puppy (8 weeks-6 months)
 - Teenager (6-18 months)
 - Young Adult (18 months-3 years)
 - Middle Age Adult (3-8 years)
 - Senior (8 years+)
 - Flexible
- What gender dog appeals to me the most?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Flexible

- What kind of a "dog pack leader" am I?
 __Strong – I have extensive experience training the most stubborn dogs
 __Moderate – I have some experience training stubborn dogs
 __Light – I am somewhat of a "pushover" so I would not do well with training a stubborn dog
 __Other
- What type of dog breed(s) have I owned in the past?

- What type of dog breed appeals to me the most and why? **NOTE:** most rescues are mixed breeds.

- What type of dog breed(s) would I least like to own (a definite "no") and why?

- What kind of coat appeals to me the most?
 __Long fur
 __Medium fur
 __Short fur
 __Long hair
 __Medium hair
 __Short hair
 __Flexible
- What kind of lifestyle do I lead and how do I want a dog to fit in with my lifestyle?
- Realistically, how much time per day will I have to dedicate to training, exercising, socializing, grooming (depending on the breed mix), interacting with, giving attention and housebreaking (if necessary) to the dog?
 __Several hours per day
 __1 hour per day
 __20-30 minutes per day
 __Little to none
 - If the dog needs to be housebroken, I:
 __Do have the time to train him/her
 __Don't have the time to train him/her
 - How do I want to interact with the dog? Do I want the dog to:
 __Run with me
 __Jog with me
 __Hike/walk with me
 __Travel in the car with me
 __Take agility and/or flyball training
 __Be a therapy or service dog
 __Be a couch potato
 __Other?
 - How affectionate do I want the dog to be? Do I want the dog to:
 __Never (or hardly ever) leave my side
 __Give me love when I arrive home but keep to himself/herself most of the time
 __Be a roommate more than companion
 __Other?
 - How trainable would I like the dog to be? Do I want:
 __An exceptionally trainable dog (therapy/service or agility dog)
 __A very trainable dog (basic commands, on and off-leash plus fun tricks)
 __A fairly trainable dog (basic commands, on and off-leash)
 __A laid-back dog (basic commands)
 __Other?

- How important is it to me that the dog is super friendly with young children?
 - Very important since I have young children
 - Somewhat important since the dog will get some exposure to young children
 - Not important – the dog will not be exposed to young children for the most part
- How important is it to me that the dog live among other animals?
 - Very important to avoid high-tension situations that could arise based on the other animals' temperaments
 - Somewhat important – just as long as the dog is friendly around other friendly animals
 - Not important – the dog will not be exposed to other animals for the most part
 - Additional information – these are the animals that the dog will be regularly exposed to:

- What kind of space can I provide to the dog?
 - Large space – I live in a large home with a large fenced in yard
 - Large space/no fence – I live in a large home with no fenced yard
 - Moderate space – I live in a moderate home with a moderate fenced in yard
 - Moderate space/no fence – I live in a moderate home with no fenced yard
 - Small space – I live in a small home with a small fenced in yard
 - Small space/no fence – I live in a small home with no fenced yard
 - Apartment – I live in an apartment that accepts dogs with no restrictions
 - Apartment/restrictions – I live in an apartment that accepts dogs but with restrictions
 - Other
- How often will the dog be in doggie daycare?
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - Occasionally
 - Emergency situations only
 - Never

Do I have interest, skills and/or experience in helping special needs dogs? Please elaborate if "yes":

References include:

How to Pick a Dog Breed, Canine Journal.
Choosing the Right Dog, Pet Health Network.
Choosing a Dog: Find Your Perfect Dog, Best Friends Animal Society.
How to Choose the Right Dog for You, Modern Dog.
Dog Breeder Selector, Animal Planet.

