



Choosing the Right Dog for First-Time Pet Owners

The benefits of owning a dog cannot be overstated. Dogs can provide friendship, help those [in recovery](#) stay on the right path, help the elderly overcome loneliness, and teach your children about responsibility. Of course, these are all benefits to the owner. That's only half of the contract. Dog ownership is also about making sure you do right by your dog - providing for its needs and making its life fun and comfortable.

Before bringing a new dog home for the first time, you should figure out exactly what type of dog will bring you happiness and be happy with you as an owner.

Do you have experience with dogs?

Some first-time pet owners do have experience with dogs, but often new pet owners have never really had to deal with a dog. Think about this before selecting a dog. If you're inexperienced, finding a dog breed that's known to carry a calmer demeanor and is easier to train may be of benefit.

"Some dogs are great for first time owners, such as Golden Retrievers, Havanese and Greyhounds. They are relatively easy to train and have a gentle temperament. Other breeds such as Fox Terrier, Tamaskan and Dalmatian need an owner who is experienced working with dogs," [says PuppyInstitute.com](https://www.puppyinstitute.com).

Consider your activity level and living space

“Exercise and grooming are the two areas which can require a lot of time. Some breeds like the Fox Terrier require lots of room, lots of activity and as much as 2 – 3 hours per day of exercise and activity. Other breeds such as the Great Dane are great apartment dogs and a good half hour walk can be sufficient for them,” continues PuppyInstitute.

If you lead a sedentary lifestyle or are too busy with work to commit to much exercise time with your dog, bringing home a highly active breed is a recipe for disaster. Not only will the dog’s behavior suffer from inactivity, making your life harder, but your dog will be unhappy. [Here’s](#) a good list of “couch potato” dog breeds that can lead happy lives with less physical activity.

You must also consider your living space. Some large, inactive dogs like Great Danes can be ok in smaller homes and apartments, but for the most part the size of your dog needs to match the size of your home/yard. If you have limited space, consider [these](#) breeds.

Are allergies an issue?

Nothing is worse than bringing home a new dog, only to have to take them back because you or someone in your household simply can’t handle the allergies. As dog allergies usually arise from dander, not the actual coat, you don’t have to rule out longer-haired dogs completely if you have allergies. But you do need to [do your research](#) and find a dog that won’t force you to buy stock in Kleenex. Schnauzers, Maltese, and Poodles are some of the best dogs for those with allergies. Bulldogs and German Shepherds are among the worst.

Consider your kids

If you are buying a dog for your kids, or you have young children in the house, you might want to tailor your choice to suit them. [Good dog breeds for kids](#) have calm temperaments, are easy going, and don’t mind the frenetic environment that often comes with having kids. All types of Retrievers, Boxers, Bull Terriers, and Newfoundlands are all good choices if you have kids.

All dogs are capable of being great addition to your family, but if you have certain needs or restrictions you need to factor them in before making the plunge into first-time pet ownership. This will ensure that you are happy and your new dog is happy.

Photo Credit: [Pixabay.com](#)