

Dog: Ready to Adopt a Dog?



Life with a dog comes with many benefits, but also involves many responsibilities. It's important to carefully think through the decision to adopt, because owning a dog is a commitment that can last anywhere from 10 to 17 years. Is now the right time for you to adopt? What are your life plans for the next 6 months to a year? Do you have young children? Do you travel for work?

Some things to consider:

Transition Time. Transitioning a dog into your home may take weeks or months. You must have the patience and time to work with the dog during this life change.

Lifestyle Change. You are responsible for daily walks, aerobic exercise, daily care, daily feedings, fresh water, house-training, manners and obedience training, giving attention, grooming, and brushing.

Exercise Needs. Rain, shine, sleet, snow, or daylight savings time, dogs still need to burn off energy with a walk or run at the park. Young or high-energy dogs will bounce off the walls if they can't bounce at the park.

Social Needs. Most dogs need ways to socialize with other dogs. Socializing keeps their social skills in shape and gives them a much needed outlet to act and play with other dogs.

Space Needs. Your dog needs space in your home. She needs to be part of the family, and needs a place of her own to eat, chew bones, and enjoy quiet time. She will spend most of her time within your home with your family. Are you ready to live with a dog 24/7?

Financial Needs. Are you ready and able to spend the money needed for food, toys, supplies, yearly license fees, and veterinary care?

Medical Needs. Your dog needs annual medical exams, vaccinations, and perhaps unexpected chronic or emergency medical care.

Vacation or Emergency Care. Who will take care of your dog if you can't vacation with her, or if you have to travel for work? And what about during emergencies?

Civic Responsibilities

- You must license your dog within your county.
- You must obey leash laws and clean up after your dog.
- You must teach your dog manners both on and off leash.
- You must exercise your dog daily to avoid boredom behaviors such as barking or jumping fences.
- You must be responsible for your dog's behavior both inside and outside of your home, on your property, and in public.