

Selecting your Breed

Choosing a breed takes much time and thought. Gather as much information as you can and learn the characteristics and temperament of potentially suitable breeds. Talk to and visit breeders or go to dog shows and other events where you can meet and handle dogs of all ages.

Do you know

- How large an adult your puppy will grow into
- If you have enough room and suitable premises to meet exercise and general living needs
- How active and / or demanding this breed will be
- If the personality and temperament will fit in with you and your family
- How much attention, care, grooming and training will be required each day?
- How much owning a dog will cost

Do you want

- Unquestioned companionship
- To spend quality time with your dog on a regular and ongoing basis
- A canine member of your family
- To accept *all* the responsibility of dog ownership

Remember.....

- Consider your lifestyle, commitments, and take time selecting your new family member
- Be prepared to wait for a puppy of your chosen breed

A puppy grows into a lifetime responsibility and will be with you for many years.



For further assistance, contact:

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LOOKING FOR A PUPPY?

The RNSWCC can help you in your search



Promoting responsible dog ownership

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So you want a puppy?

Slow down for a minute and ask yourself questions such as these before committing yourself to what will be a long-term responsibility.

- Will a dog fit in with my lifestyle and commitments?
- Will I always have time to give on a daily basis for exercise, care and grooming?
- Have I made adequate provision for living quarters and secure premises?
- Am I prepared to give the extra time a puppy needs for feeding, house-training, lead-training, socialising and teaching basic good manners?
- Am I prepared to forego other activities and make sacrifices in order to tend to the puppy's needs?
- Can I afford the cost of bringing up a puppy and own a dog; to pay for equipment, veterinary expenses, council registration or professional grooming?
- Do I have time to teach the children how to properly care for a puppy and have I made them fully aware that this new "pet" will be a long-term commitment, not a short-term toy?
- If the children lose interest or my circumstances change, will I be able to continue giving all the care and attention required?
- When I am away or on holidays, will the needs of the puppy still be met?
- Will my canine companion be accepted and treated as a member of my family for the rest of his life?
- Do I really want a dog?

If you have answer "yes" to all the above then you are ready to choose your breed.

Selecting the Right Breed For you

Owning a dog can be a fulfilling and rewarding experience. Much thought and consideration needs to be put into your choice of breed. Always bear in mind the size, temperament, exercise and grooming needs of the *adult dog*.

Consider your lifestyle, commitments and availability of time on a daily basis, your ability to exercise and your ability to pay for the myriad of expenses dog ownership brings.

Your property must have secure fences and gates regardless of your choice of breed. A safe and comfortable kennel or bed must be provided, with access available at all times.

If you have children, you must take their needs, activities and ages into account, as your new puppy is to become part of *their* family.

A dog **MUST** fit into the family lifestyle, so the right breed of dog for the right reasons needs to be decided well in advance of purchase, otherwise your new family member could well become an unwanted burden.

What kind of dog is best for me?

First and foremost you need to ask yourself why you want a dog. Is it for companionship, exhibition or show ring, protection or security, working or trialing, sport and recreation, or a pet for the family?

You need to decide whether you want a small, medium of large dog, quiet or active, long coated or short coated, male or female, and the type of activities in which you and your family would like to participate.

The size and location of your premises will have a bearing on the size of dog you choose. Also bear in mind many small dogs have just as high an activity level as larger ones; they just don't need as much space!

There are many different types of coat, all need grooming and almost all will drop hair. If you don't want an adult with long, flowing coat that requires daily grooming, then buy a short-coated breed!

Males are usually a little larger and stronger than females. Make sure the size and strength level of your dog matches that of your children. If you are not planning to show or breed, spaying or neutering is recommended. A bitch comes into season at least once, or twice a year and must be confined and kept away from males for some weeks. Many health risks for a bitch are minimised once spayed.

As you learn about the different breeds, remember the purpose for which a particular breed was developed, for example a Working dog or a Gundog, active in mind and body, will require regular occupation and a lot of exercise.

How do I learn about different breeds?

A good place to start is to look in books or on the internet, go to dog shows or obedience clubs where you can talk to owners and see a number of breeds. Visit friends and relatives with dogs and ask them about their experiences. Find out about characteristics and attributes of various breeds by talking to breeders and contacting breed clubs.

Dog shows give prospective puppy owners an excellent opportunity to view the many breeds available and the chance to talk to breeders and exhibitors. It also allows you to see dogs of all ages, so you will get a good idea of what the adult will be like in size and temperament. Shows are scheduled each weekend that represent many breeds, a group of breeds or a single breed. Details and dates are available from the Royal NSW Canine Council, as is written information on breeds, and contact details for breeders and breed clubs.

Most breeds have some hereditary conditions. Ensure you find out about these and any other potential health problems to be watched for.

Once you have narrowed down your field it is time to learn more specific details about your chosen breed and visit some breeders.

A responsible person will choose a pure bred dog because the behaviour, appearance and size of the dog are predictable!