



My Ideal Dog

If your family decided to get a dog, what would your ideal dog be? Answer the following questions, circling the traits you would like in a dog.

Active or Quiet? All dogs need attention, but do you want an active dog to run and play with, or a quiet dog that doesn't require much exercise?

Dominant or Submissive? All dogs must be trained, but are you strong and confident enough to set and keep the rules with a bold dog, or are you more suited to a sensitive dog that will respond to gentle training and a low voice?

Outgoing or Reserved? Do you want a dog that is super-friendly with everyone he meets, or might a more independent dog best fit you?

Highly Trainable or Headstrong? Fun-loving dogs are sometimes mischievous. Are you prepared to handle a dog that just naturally digs in the yard or one that barks a lot? Are you willing to work on improving behavior? Are you patient enough to keep reminding your dog of the rules, or do you need a quick learner?

Small, Medium or Large? Can your house and yard handle a medium or large dog? Some dogs are better suited for pint-sized settings.

Long-Haired or Short? Most dogs shed, and all dogs must be brushed and groomed to stay healthy and happy. The amount of grooming needed, however, varies from breed to breed. Longer coats usually require extra time or expense to keep neat and shiny. Some dogs may require brushing once a day, while a quick brushing once a week is all another dog may need.

Puppy or Adult? The advantage to getting a puppy is that you'll be able to raise him your own way from the beginning. Puppies are irresistibly cute, but they also need the most time—for house-training, feeding and handling. Positive interaction with people is critical to the normal development of a puppy. Older dogs may take less time to train and may already be housebroken. And remember, old dogs *can* learn new tricks!

Independent or Attention-seeking? Dogs have been selectively bred for centuries to perform certain functions. Consequently, certain breeds have a propensity for wanting to constantly be at their owner's side, while others are content to have their own space.

Now use the "Best Breed For You" sheet to start your breed search.