

SO.....

YOU THINK YOU WANT A DOG!

We at Stray Haven Humane Society want the process of selecting your dog and then living with it to be a very pleasant event, so we have some thoughts and suggestions to share with you.

1. **RESEARCH** First, please do some research on the type of breed you are thinking of getting. If getting a mixed breed, do your best to look at the two dominant breeds in the dog you are looking at. Important considerations are, hi or lo energy level, trainability, short hair or long hair and grooming needs, are they compatible with children. Sometimes the smaller breeds have a much higher energy level and thus need more exercise than some of the larger breeds.
2. **DOGS AS GIFTS** If the dog is to be a gift, PLEASE make sure the person getting the dog really wants the dog. It may be better to get a gift certificate and let the person chose the dog he or she wants. It is also better to bring the dog home after the Holidays when the house hold is a little quieter and calmer.
3. **SUPPLIES** Before you bring your dog home, make sure you have all the supplies you may need: dishes, toys, bed, collar, leash, brushes, food, and treats. Have an appointment with your veterinarian, so you can have your dog checked and any immunizations that may be needed can be given right away.
4. **CRATE TRAINING** Please consider crate training your dog, this protects your house and your dog. Also helps with the house breaking issue.
5. **TIME AWAY FROM HOME** Do you work outside the home? Where will you be leaving your dog when you are away from the house? We strongly recommend you do not tie them out in the back yard. A happy dog lives WITH his family.
6. **SPAY & NEUTER** We strongly recommend you spay or neuter your dog, even if you choose to get a pure bred dog. The only reason to breed a dog is to improve the breed. All dogs adopted from Stray Haven must be spayed or neutered.
7. **EXERCISE** Are you willing to walk your dog every day, no matter what the weather, bring it to an obedience class, and make it an important and treasured part of your family?
8. **SUPERVISION** Be aware you will need to supervise your children when they are playing with your dog.
9. **DOGS & KIDS** When dogs and children are playing it is very easy for the dog to hurt the children OR the children to hurt the dog. Small breeds and puppies are especially vulnerable.
10. **CLEANING UP** Are you willing to live with dog hair, leaves tracked in, muddy footprints and snowy coats? Are you prepared to clean-up after your dog (from the usual mess to poop duty)?
11. **GROWING UP** Remember cute little puppies grow up into rambunctious teenagers and large adults.
12. **PATIENCE** Please be patient with your new dog. They are in a new situation, they do not know the house rules, may not recognize the door to go to when needing to go out. Give you and your dog at least two months to really settle in and feel comfortable in your "pack". Some dogs may take even longer than this.
13. **LIFETIME** A dog is a lifetime commitment, are you willing to make that commitment?

If after reading all of this, you still want a dog, then you are ready, and we wish you the best. Please feel free to contact us at Stray Haven Humane Society with any questions or problems you may have once you get your dog home.

Thank you,

Carol, Mary, Jody and Karen

Stray Haven Dog Obedience Instructors