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Dog Rescue: Is it Right for You?

By Blake Kritzberg

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by: **Blake Kritzberg**

Ever had a hankering for a certain breed of dog? Not an obsession, mind you - not the sort of longing that would send you rushing to a breeder, thousand-dollar-bill in your sweaty palm - but just a gentle appreciation for the virtues of the Poodle, Pug or Pyrenean Mastiff?

Let's say you have -- but you thought buying a purebred pup was a less-than-ideal use of your family's resources. If that's the case, it might be time to look up your local Dog Rescue organization! Dog Rescues are organized by breed, so prospective parents can sign up to be notified when new poodles or pugs come in.

What's the advantage of adopting a rescue dog, instead of a breeder pup? A rescue dog isn't always cheaper than the breeder's (though it usually is). The main difference is this: your money equals a new life for a dog that completely lost out on his first roll of the dice.

How do I adopt a Rescue Dog?

Dog rescue organizations are volunteer-driven, and loosely organized. Your best bet is to "Google" for the one nearest you, using the breed name. So poodle lovers can search for "Poodle Rescue" or "Poodle Rescue Florida," if they live down south.

Once you find an organization, you'll want to apply as an adoptive parent. This may involve a down payment. It also usually involves a form in which you describe your history of animal ownership, and supply references. You'll provide some information on your beliefs about dog discipline, your house and yard, and where you plan to keep your newest family member.

The dog rescue foster moms and will want to talk to you in person, too, to get a feel for your compatibility with their particular pup.

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What will I pay for a Rescue Dog?

On average, you'll pay between \$200 and \$300. If you thought "rescue" adoption was cheap, this might seem like a lot, but the fact is it simply covers basic procedures to bring the animal back to health. Most dogs arrive at the Rescue with skin problems, tartar-coated teeth, out-of-date vaccinations, possible parasites and other issues.

How will a Rescue Dog differ from a breeder or pet store dog?

In a number of ways. Your new adoptee is likely to be:

Older. Few dogs are rescued as puppies. A few are 'adolescent.' The vast majority are middle-aged.

Cautious. Your adoptee may have a lot of fear and yes, grief, to process. If he felt like a part of his

former family, he may be grieving his sudden "ejection." He may need time and patience to take an interest in food, play, or his general surroundings. If he was starved or kept isolated, he'll need time and patience to learn to socialize.

"Readable." Buying a puppy means taking a wild guess at the eventual adult. When you rescue a grown dog, you get a much better idea of his personality. It's easier to make the perfect match.

Am I the right type of owner for a Rescue Dog?

An important question! You, the owner, are the last and most crucial link in a chain. The chain's only purpose is provide a "happily-ever-after" for a dog that desperately deserves one. Can you be that happily-ever-after, even for a dog that may have some rough edges?

Ask yourself these questions:

– Do I really care what color the coat is, what sex it is or how many pounds it weighs?

If so, you really want a puppy from a breeder, not a rescue. Rescue dogs rarely conform to an exact type.

– Am I looking to save money?

You may not save money buying a rescued dog, even though the initial cost could be \$700 or \$800 less than from a breeder. Rescue dogs often need more medical care because of the abuse and neglect they suffered before.

– Is my life relatively stable and my household relatively quiet?

All abused creatures, whether dog or human, crave and need an unusually organized household. Many people can be good parents to a rescue dog. But perhaps the best potential parent of all is an older

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person or couple whose children are grown, and who has time and patience to devote to the dog's mental and physical healing.

– Can I provide regular medical care and regular grooming?

The deepest wish in the heart of the Dog Rescue folks is each of their dogs never has to go through another minute of hunger, discomfort or pain again.

When dogs are starved, they sometimes have incontinence problems that heal only slowly. They may need more regular teeth cleaning than a continually cared-for dog. Some need a house training refresher when former owners didn't bother. Most were never clipped or groomed, even in the non-shedding breeds. Do you have the time and resources to keep your dog totally safe and comfortable?

– Can I consider the need and adopt a boy rescue, or an older rescue?

For reasons not entirely clear, many potential adopters go for girl dogs. There's no logic to this: all rescue dogs are spayed or neutered, and boys are as intelligent, witty, loyal, well-behaved and loving as their female counterparts. Perhaps it's just that the rescue impulse leads us to think of "damsels in

distress"!

At any rate, that adorable boy that needs a home really deserves your attention. Someone less educated might pass him by for reasons they don't fully understand.

The upshot is, a rescue dog can make the best pet you've ever had. He understands exactly what you're giving him, since he didn't have it before. Your newest family member will offer you an overabundance of loyalty for the rest of his days.

How can I help with Dog Rescues?

Dog Rescues are always looking for help. Of course, they need financial contributions, and kennel and medical supplies. They also need 'foster moms' who perform the difficult task of patiently rendering a dog adoptable, then giving it up to its final owner! So if you have skills in this area and want to help, contact the small and amazing group of volunteers that make up your local Dog Rescue.

Blake Kritzberg is happily Mom to a rescue dog, and proprietor of Poodle-oo: Fashion for the Toy Dog Breeds.

The Different Breeds Of Dogs

By Wendy Yeager

The American Kennel Club recognizes 150 different dog breeds. There are seven different groups in

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which the dog can belong. They are assigned to one of the groups based on what the breed of dog was originally developed for. There is also a miscellaneous group if the dog doesn't fit into one of the seven. The seven different dog groups are as follows. The first is the sporting group. These dogs were developed to work with people who hunted birds. A Labrador Retriever would fit into this group. Labs can also be beneficial as guide dogs and in search and rescue. The second group is the hound group. These dogs were developed to hunt using their scent and sight. This group includes the Whippet, which is the fastest domestic animal of their size. They can run up to 35 mph. Thirdly, is the working group, which includes the Saint Bernard. They have been known for hundreds of years for their rescue work in the Alps. Other dogs in this group are useful for herding or guarding. The fourth group is the terrier group, first developed to hunt vermin. The Australian Terrier, one of the smallest terriers, is a part of this group. They were developed to work side by side with the Australian pioneers to aid in tending the sheep or chasing off invaders. The fifth group is the toy group, developed to be companions. A Japanese Chin is a good example. They like to play, show off, and spend lots of time trying to keep clean and tidy. The sixth group is the non-sporting group, which overall do not perform the tasks that they were originally developed for. A good example would be the American Eskimo Dog. These dogs were sometimes used in circus acts at the beginning of the century. The seventh group is the herding group, which was meant to be used in working with livestock. The German Shepherd is in this group. They are not only useful in herding livestock, they are also great companions to humans.

Originally, many dog breeds were first developed for specific uses, such as hunting, companionship, herding, etc. Today, because man has created such a large variety of dog breeds, there is a dog out there to make almost anybody happy. Currently, the most popular dog breed in America is the Labrador Retriever, with the Golden Retriever coming in second.

Published by: Wendy Yeager

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