

Shall we get a puppy?

Prepare yourself

Now that you have decided to take a puppy into your home, see our previous newsletter, the next step would be to choose the breed of your puppy. Choosing a breed is not only about choosing a cute puppy because you like the way it looks, there are other things to consider in order to make a balanced choice and to be sure that your expectations of having a pet are met as closely as possible.

As much as choosing the correct breed for you helps smoothing things out, it will still depend on your own input as well to get things to work out nicely! Unfortunately we still see too many people choosing a breed based on fashion, to later find out that this was not the one for them.

Don't despair choosing your best match, there are plenty of qualified professionals who will be more than happy to give advice. So use their knowledge! We at the BVC think that choosing the right breed is so important that we are more than happy to help you with this.

If you want to choose on your own, go at it systematically, it will narrow the field down to only a few breeds to choose from. Try to read as much as possible about the breeds you can choose from, either through books or via the internet.

Remember that your choice should be based on an adult dog behavior since that cute puppy will grow to adulthood quicker than you would like him/her to.



Things to consider are

- For what purpose do you want a dog?
- Purebred or a mixed breed
- Male or Female
- Big or small
- Inside or outside (outside in the UAE is not a real option due to the weather conditions)
- Long or short hair
- Active or not so active
- Social or dedicated to one owner
- Easy to train or independent
- Who besides me and my immediate family will he/she affect?
- Other

Please note that the selection of breeds given in this article is not a complete overview

For what purpose do you want a dog?

- Family pet or companionship
- Playmate for the kids
- Protection
- For a special activity like breeding, showing, hunting etc.
- As a status symbol
- A combination of the above.



Family pet	Kids Playmate	Protection	Special activity	Status
Labrador Golden Retriever Boxer Poodle	Shih Tzu Pug Beagle Cavalier King Charles	Doberman Bouvier German Shepherd Rottweiler	This depends on your activity. For breeding and showing you can choose any healthy pedigree breed	Depending on what statement you would like to make with your dog

Purebred or a mixed breed

This depends on your own preference and your willingness to give an abandoned dog a new home (most dogs available for adoption in the pet shelters are cross breeds). The UAE local desert mixed dogs in general are very protective towards their "pack" (to which you will belong) and hence will quicker challenge a person not belonging to the family. This does not make them the easiest choice for a young family with lots of kids playing regularly in the house or for first time owners. They have often had a difficult start to their lives and require lots of time and patience from the person adopting them. Purebred dogs have certain characteristics, which make them a more predictable choice. Purebred dogs on the other hand have sometimes the problem of being more vulnerable to inborn health problems and careful consideration towards this should be given.

Male or Female

Again this relates to your personal preference. Female dogs will be on heat 1-3 times yearly and can get pregnant if you opt not to spay them. Some see this as a problem others see this as positive and love to breed their dog, once she has reached a suitable age for breeding (not younger than 2 years). Male dogs can have problems marking their territory and some tend to be very macho in their behavior.

Big or small

Choosing the size of your dog depends on your living conditions (an apartment is not the right place for a large dog), your experience as a dog owner, the amount of money you can spend on your dog, the level of exercise you can give it and your own personal choice. It may also depend on whether you have children as small children run the risk of being knocked down (accidentally or not). Please keep in mind that smaller breeds are not necessarily easier to keep in a small apartment due to their often high level of activity and need for attention.

Small Breed	Medium breed	Large breed	Giant breed
Bichon Frise Bolognese Chihuahua Dachshund Toy Spaniel Jack Russell Terrier Maltese Miniature Pinscher Miniature Poodle Papillion Pomeranian Pug Shih Tzu West Highland White Yorkshire Terrier	Basset Hound Border Collie Dalmatian English Cocker Spaniel Eng. Springer Spaniel French Poodle Portuguese Waterdog Saluki	Afghan Airedale Terrier Alaskan Malamute Boxer Bouvier Briard Doberman Greyhound Pointer Setter German Shepherd Golden Retriever Labrador Rottweiler	Irish Wolfhound Scottish Deerhound Newfoundlander Great Dane Saint Bernard dog Great Pyrenees Neapolitan Mastiff

Inside or outside

Although it is possible to keep a dog outside your home in a cooler climate, this is not a real option in the UAE due to the weather conditions. Still it should be taken into consideration since some people only live in the UAE for up to 5 years and most dogs in general are living between 10-15 years. If you are planning on leaving the UAE in the future, please keep in mind that there is a huge process involved in taking your lifetime family member with you, of course depending on which country you will be relocating to.



Long or short hair

In general breeds with long(er) hair require daily grooming, regular visits to the grooming salon and are likely to shed more or so it seems (it may seem more because the hairs are longer) than short haired breeds. They will also have more dirt getting stuck in their coat and hence bring in more mess after walking/playing. This may sound so obvious but is often overlooked when choosing a puppy. So, if you do not want to groom your dog daily, spend money on a grooming professional or if you do not like too many hairs in your home, a long haired dog is not the right choice for you.

Short haired Breeds	Grooming requirements	Long haired Breeds	Long haired Breeds
Airdale Terrier	Medium	Afghan	Difficult
Basset	Minimal	Cocker Spaniel	Medium
Beagle	Minimal	Collie	Difficult
Bichon Frise	Difficult	Bouvier	Medium
Boxer	Easy	Briard	Medium
Bulldog	Minimal	King Charles Spaniel	Difficult
Chihuahua	Minimal	Setter	Medium
Corgi	Easy	Schnautzer	Medium
Dachshund	Depends on coat type	Golden Retriever	Medium
Doberman	Minimal	Lhasa Apso	Difficult
Great Dane	Minimal	New Foundlander	Medium
Greyhound	Minimal	Sheepdog	Difficult
Miniature Pinscher	Easy	Papillion	Medium
Pointer	Depends on coat type	Pekingese	Difficult
Pug	Easy	Pomeranian	Medium
Rhodesian Ridgeback	Minimal	Poodle	Medium
Rottweiler	Minimal	Saluki	Medium
Weimaraner	Minimal	Shih Tzu	Difficult
		Yorkshire Terrier	Medium

Active or not so active

Dogs with high activity levels need regular training, attention and exercise. They are therefore not the right choice for first time owners & if you are short in time or not as mobile as would be required for this type of dog. Some dogs are already content with just being with you and don't need to run of their excess energy, other dogs are happy to stay where they are and protect their located responsible area. Besides your own input, the surroundings also contribute to the choice to be made. The 24th floor in the middle of the City is not ideal for a German Shepherd or Rhodesian Ridgeback.

Below you'll find an overview of dog breeds with their required exercise level:

Vigorous exercise	High exercise	Moderate exercise	Low exercise
Airedale Terrier	Basset Hound	Afghan Hound	Chinese Crested
Border Collie	Belgian Tervuren	Am. Staffordshire Terrier	English Toy Spaniel
Dalmatian	Borzoï	Beagle	Havanese
Doberman Pinscher	Boston Terrier	Bernese Mountain Dog	Shih Tzu
Great Dane	Bouvier	Bichon Frise	
Irish Setter	Boxer	Border Terrier	
Port. Water Dog	Bull Terrier	King Charles Spaniel	
Saluki	Chow Chow	Chihuahua	
Samoyed	Collie	Cocker Spaniel	
Siberian Husky	Curly-Coated Retriever	Dachshund	
	English Foxhound	English Cocker Spaniel	
	English Setter	French Bull Dog	
	Flat-Coated Retriever	Lhasa Apso	
	German Pinscher	Maltese	
	German Shepherd	Newfoundlander	
	Giant Schnauzer	Pug	
	Golden Retriever	Rhodesian Ridgeback	
	Greyhound	Schnauzer	
	Labrador Retriever	Tibetan Spaniel	
	Miniature Pinscher	West Highland White	
	Papillon	Whippet	
	Pekingese	Yorkshire Terrier	
	Pomeranian		
	Poodle		
	Rottweiler		
	Tibetan Terrier		
	Weimaraner		
	Welsh Terrier		

Social or dedicated to only one owner

You are looking for a family dog/playmate for the kids, it is important to concentrate on a social dog. Having said that, dogs are more dedicated to the one person that takes care of him/her than to other family members. It is therefore important that all family members agree on the breed but the person who is mainly looking after the pet should have the more important vote.

Social dog breeds	Dedicated to one owner
Pug	Dalmation
Newfoundlander	Chow Chow
Labrador	Doberman
Keeshond	Malamute
Retriever(s)	Husky
Collie	German Shepherd
Poodle	Rottweiler
Bulldog	

Easy to train or independent

Although time and effort spent training your dog contribute to the outcome there is an obvious genetic predisposition towards the outcome. Inconsistency is the most common mistake while training dogs. All pet owners should be honest and think about how consistent they are. Besides consistency, body language is a real pointer too. Dogs are absolute experts when it comes to reading between the lines and quickly figure out who is in charge, you or them!

Easy to train breeds	Independent dog breeds
Cavalier King Charles Spaniel	Beagle
Corgi	Bichon Frise
Fox Terrier	Boxer
French Bulldog	Bulldog
German Shepherd	Chihuahua
Golden Retriever	Chow Chow
Greyhound	Curly Coated Retriever
Havanese	Dachshund
Keeshond	Dalmatian
Labrador Retriever	Doberman
Maltese	Great Dane
Portuguese Waterdog	Husky
Puli	Jack Russell Terrier
Schnauzer	Lhasa Apso
Swiss Mountain Dog	Miniature Pinscher
Tibetan Spaniel	Newfoundlander
Welsh Terrier	Pekinese
	Pomeranian
	Poodle
	Pug
	Rhodesian Ridgeback
	Rottweiler
	Saint Bernard
	Schnauzer
	Shar Pei Shi Tzu
	Springer Spaniel
	Toy Poodle
	Vizsla
	Weimaraner
	West Highland White Terrier
	Whippet

Who besides me and my immediate family will it affect?

This may seem obvious however it should be pointed out; other people should not be affected by the fact that you have taken in a dog (unless of course they are in your home or on your property).

Things to consider here are:

Are we planning to have family expansion in the future?

Do I have family members with known-allergies?

Will my landlord allow me to have a dog?

Consider your neighbours and all other tenants if you live in an apartment building as some dogs like the terrier types tend to bark more than other breeds.

Others

When you are choosing a breed, please make the dog's needs and temperament key importance instead of your own expectancies. A depressed, bored or otherwise unhappy dog can develop serious behavioural problems.

If you are opting for a purebred or pedigree breed, please make sure that you understand that some may have inborn or genetic health problems and are therefore can be more costly in the future, both financially and emotionally.

