

## Important Questions to Ask Yourself

- 1. Do I have a clear understanding of the temperament and distinctive “characteristics” of the breed in which I am interested?**
- 2. Do I have adequate facilities for this breed** – a large enclosed yard for a highly active breed; a high, secure fence for one of the larger breeds; reasonable physical “distance” from neighbors for one of the more vocal breeds (such as hounds and some terriers). If a renter, will your landlord or complex allow you to have a dog? Dogs are pack animals and become very unhappy when forced to live alone outside. This can often result in barking, digging, fence climbing and a variety of other vices that come from lack of attention.
- 3. Am I aware of the maintenance required for this breed?** Frequent brushing for long, heavy coats; stripping and clipping of many terriers; regular ear cleaning of dogs with long or “floppy” ears; professional grooming of some breeds such as poodles, schnauzers, etc.
- 4. Can I afford the continuous care and feeding of a dog?** Things to consider: a good quality commercial dog food, annual vaccinations, rabies boosters, preventative heart worm medicine, unforeseen illness or health problems.
- 5. Am I aware of some possible physical problems that certain breeds can be susceptible to?** Deafness, hip dysplasia, epilepsy, coat or skin sensitivity are a few.
- 6. Do I plan to train my dog so that it will be a pleasant, well – behaved and socialized companion?** Am I willing to make such a commitment in time, effort and money?
- 7. Is there anyone in my family who does NOT want a dog?** In most cases if there is any one family member who is against having a dog the dog will eventually be given up due to disagreements over the money and time that must be spent on the pet. This is heartbreaking for the family and a major trauma for your pet.
- 8. Do I have, or plan to have, children?** If so, does this breed have a reputation for being accepting of young children with a predictable, extremely stable attitude? Is it known to be confident and welcoming with strangers?
- 9. Do I have plans in the foreseeable future for a major life or career change that would necessitate moving?** Would I be willing to take the dog with me unless absolutely impossible?

**10. Do I want this dog for my companion and pleasure, or is it possibly to fill some other need?** Solely for protection, to babysit another animal, as a gift for someone? Will I be the one individual who will care for and love this dog for the duration of it's life?