

Choosing a Shelter Dog

A shelter is a great place to find a dog that needs a loving home. These facilities usually have dogs in a variety of ages, sizes, colors and breeds — and many of them are there because of issues related to their owners rather than their own behavior or temperament.

In the long run, dogs adopted from shelters typically cost less than those purchased or even acquired for free because shelters generally take care of vaccinations, spaying or neutering and even microchipping. Talk with your local shelter professionals to get a clear understanding of costs and requirements for your specific breed. They will have all the information you need to take your new dog home with confidence.

Dog Characteristics
Choosing the right dog can be tricky in a shelter environment. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to make the process smoother. Many shelters have websites with information on some of the available dogs. This can help you compare choices before even stepping into a shelter, although face-to-face interaction will likely be the defining factor in your choice. Shelters generally conduct thorough behavioral analysis of each dog and

can give you important information on why the dog is there, possible health issues and personality traits they have observed.

The key to leaving the shelter with the right dog for your family is finding one that fits your personality and lifestyle. Some breeds need more exercising, brushing and meals than others. Be sure to weigh all possible factors in terms of your free time and financial situation to make sure you can adequately care for the dog.

voice their opinion. While the decision will likely come down to your gut instinct and preference, allowing your children to be

involved in the process can help them with critical-thinking and decision-making skills.



The process of assessing the dog's suitability for your family and then making an educated decision requires maturity and common sense — two important qualities you are trying to instill in your children.

Involving the Kids
If you have children at home, choosing a shelter dog can be one of the first important decisions they help you make. The process of assessing the dog's suitability for your family and then making an educated decision requires maturity and common sense — two important qualities you are trying to instill in your children. Sit down with them while you perform research on breeds. Discuss pros and cons of various breeds and give them the freedom to

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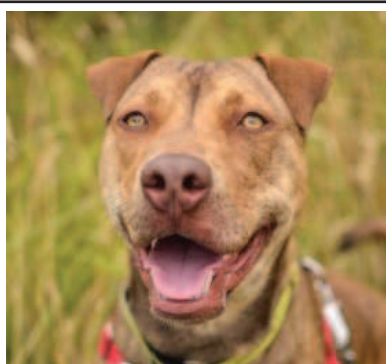

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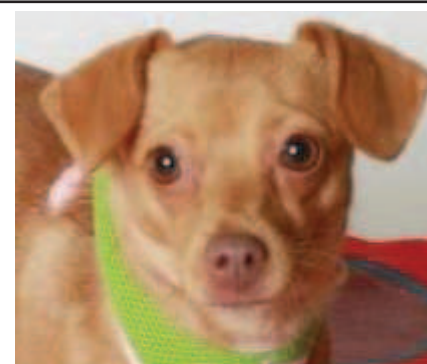
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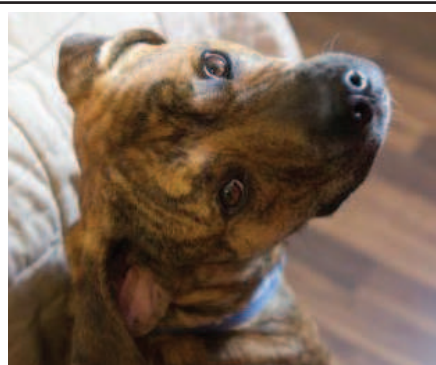
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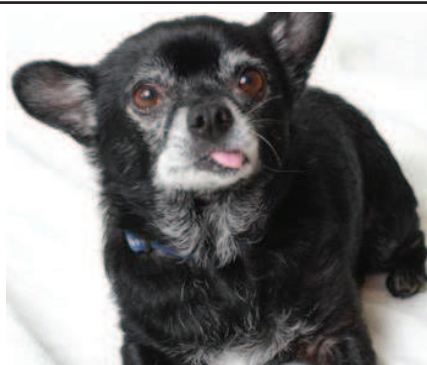
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