# 40 Popular Dog Breed Mini-Guides

A practical free starter library for future dog owners

**What this collection is:** short, breed-by-breed planning sheets to help you compare everyday care, activity, grooming, training, and questions to ask before choosing a dog.

**How the list was selected:** the 40 breeds follow the American Kennel Club's 2025 U.S. registration ranking, published in 2026. The ranking reflects AKC registrations; it is not a recommendation that one breed is best for every home.

**Important:** breed descriptions summarize tendencies and are not guarantees. Individual dogs vary by health, age, upbringing, and experience. Meet the specific dog and speak with a veterinarian. This reader guide is educational and does not replace veterinary advice.

## Inside: 40 quick guides, two pages per breed


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General references: AKC 2025 breed ranking · AVMA: Selecting a pet dog · ASPCA: General dog care

# 01 | French Bulldog

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 1 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Compact companion; usually moderate daily activity.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; routine brushing and skin-fold checks as advised.

**Daily activity and care:** Plan calm walks and indoor enrichment. Avoid strenuous exercise in heat; ask a veterinarian about breathing, heat tolerance, and safe activity.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

A close companion may suit a smaller home, provided the household can manage heat sensitivity, health costs, and company. Do not assume a short walk means no enrichment.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# French Bulldog | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Short, positive training; reward calm handling and leash skills. Keep the dog cool, use a harness that does not restrict breathing, and maintain a healthy body condition.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

Bring all available records and ask the veterinarian to review vaccines, parasite prevention, dental care, nutrition and body condition, exercise limits, spay/neuter timing if relevant, and any screening suggested by the dog's age, history, and breed. Ask which signs need urgent care. Do not start supplements or change diet based only on a breed description.

## Before bringing the dog home

■ Confirm landlord / HOA and local rules ■ Choose a primary veterinarian ■ Prepare food, water, ID, leash, and safe rest area ■ Plan daily care and backup care ■ Set a realistic grooming and training budget ■ Arrange gradual introductions to people and pets

## Reader reminder

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# 02 | Labrador Retriever

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 2 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Medium-to-large sporting dog; often social and energetic.

**Coat and grooming:** Short double coat that sheds; brush regularly, more during seasonal shedding.

**Daily activity and care:** Provide daily movement, sniffing and retrieving games, plus food puzzles. Use measured meals and monitor body condition with the veterinarian.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit an active household able to offer interaction, training, and exercise. Ask about excitement level and comfort around children and other pets.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Labrador Retriever | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use reward-based training and secure leash practice. Teach settle, recall, and polite greetings; keep exercise age- and health-appropriate.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

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# 03 | Golden Retriever

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 3 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Large, people-oriented sporting dog; usually benefits from regular activity.

**Coat and grooming:** Long double coat; brush several times weekly and check behind ears, tail, and feathering for tangles.

**Daily activity and care:** Combine walks with retrieving, scent games, and calm training. Dry and check the coat after wet outdoor time.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Often a fit for households that want an involved companion and can keep up with coat care and daily activity. Meet the individual dog; friendliness is not guaranteed by breed.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Golden Retriever | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Practice gentle grooming, recall, loose-leash walking, and calm greetings. Ask about the dog's comfort with handling and visitors.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

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# 04 | German Shepherd Dog

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 4 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Large working/herding breed; needs purposeful activity and learning.

**Coat and grooming:** Dense double coat with substantial shedding; brush routinely and during coat blow.

**Daily activity and care:** Plan daily physical activity and short thinking tasks. Prevent boredom with training, scent games, and appropriate jobs.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Best considered by households ready for structured training, social exposure, and a strong dog. Ask about the individual's confidence, reactivity, and experience.

## A realistic first-week routine

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# German Shepherd Dog | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use consistent reward-based training. Discuss growth, joint health, and appropriate exercise with a veterinarian; avoid forced high-impact activity in a growing puppy.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 05 | Dachshund

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 5 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small, long-bodied hound; curious and often keen to follow scents.

**Coat and grooming:** Smooth, longhaired, and wirehaired coats have different grooming needs.

**Daily activity and care:** Offer sniff walks and puzzle games. Keep the dog at a healthy weight and arrange safe access to furniture or steps to reduce repeated jumping.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Can fit many homes when daily walks, training, and back-conscious handling are realistic. Ask how the dog responds to being picked up and to stairs.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Dachshund | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Reward calm handling and recall. Use a supportive two-hand lift when needed; discuss back health, weight, and activity with the veterinarian.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

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# 06 | Poodle

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 6 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Available in Standard, Miniature, and Toy sizes; bright and active.

**Coat and grooming:** Curly coat needs frequent brushing and a regular professional grooming schedule.

**Daily activity and care:** Plan daily engagement, learning games, and movement suited to size and age. A clipping schedule should be arranged before mats develop.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

A possible match for people who want an involved, trainable dog and can budget time and money for grooming. No dog is guaranteed allergy-safe.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Poodle | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Teach brushing and clipper handling gradually with rewards. Ask a groomer and veterinarian to help set an individual coat and ear-care routine.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

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# 07 | Beagle

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 7 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small-to-medium scent hound; curious and strongly nose-led.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; routine brushing and regular ear checks.

**Daily activity and care:** Use sniffing as enrichment. Keep on leash or in secure fencing because scent can distract; plan for possible vocalizing.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit an engaged household that enjoys walks and can manage scent chasing and noise. Ask how the dog behaves when left alone.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Beagle | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Practice recall on a long line in safe spaces, reward check-ins, and use food puzzles. Confirm local noise and housing rules.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

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• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 08 | Rottweiler

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 8 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Large, powerful working dog; needs thoughtful social learning and training.

**Coat and grooming:** Short double coat; brush regularly and monitor shedding.

**Daily activity and care:** Plan daily activity, skill training, rest, and safe enrichment. Introduce people and environments gradually without forcing interaction.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Consider household strength, experience, housing rules, insurance terms, and time for training. Meet the dog with a qualified, humane trainer if needed.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Rottweiler | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Teach loose-leash walking, settle, handling, and consent-based greetings. Ask the veterinarian about appropriate growth, joint care, and preventive screening.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 09 | German Shorthaired Pointer

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 9 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Athletic hunting breed; commonly has high exercise and engagement needs.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; simple brushing, with routine nail and ear checks.

**Daily activity and care:** Plan vigorous age-appropriate exercise, scent work, and learning. Secure outdoor areas and leash skills matter.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Best for active people who enjoy outdoor routines. Ask about prey interest, ability to settle indoors, and experience staying alone.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# German Shorthaired Pointer | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use reward-based recall and impulse-control games. Build fitness gradually and discuss safe exercise for the dog's age and health.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

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# 10 | Bulldog

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 10 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Stocky companion; activity is often moderate and heat tolerance may be limited.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; check skin folds and keep them clean and dry as advised by a veterinarian.

**Daily activity and care:** Choose gentle activity in cool conditions. Stop for noisy or labored breathing, weakness, or overheating and contact a veterinarian promptly.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Consider only if the household can provide careful heat management and a veterinary budget. Do not equate low activity with low care.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Bulldog | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use a well-fitted harness, keep walks short in warm weather, and ask a veterinarian to assess breathing, skin, eyes, weight, and exercise limits.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

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# 11 | Cane Corso

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 11 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Very large guardian-type working breed; needs experienced, consistent handling.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; regular brushing and routine nail care.

**Daily activity and care:** Provide structured walks, training, rest, and supervised enrichment. Plan secure management around visitors and other animals.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

A serious commitment: check local housing/insurance restrictions and choose only with a realistic plan for socialization and skilled support.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Cane Corso | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Prioritize calm handling, leash skills, muzzle conditioning if appropriate, and supervised introductions. Ask a veterinarian about growth and joint-safe activity.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

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# 12 | Cavalier King Charles Spaniel

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 12 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small companion spaniel; often enjoys close human company and moderate activity.

**Coat and grooming:** Silky coat with feathering; brush several times weekly and check ears for tangles.

**Daily activity and care:** Offer walks, play, and company. Build alone-time gradually; ask the caregiver about separation comfort.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit people seeking a companion who is included in daily life. Budget for regular preventive veterinary care and grooming.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Cavalier King Charles Spaniel | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use gentle reward-based training. Ask a veterinarian about breed-relevant heart and eye screening, dental care, and what health records to request.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

Bring all available records and ask the veterinarian to review vaccines, parasite prevention, dental care, nutrition and body condition, exercise limits, spay/neuter timing if relevant, and any screening suggested by the dog's age, history, and breed. Ask which signs need urgent care. Do not start supplements or change diet based only on a breed description.

## Before bringing the dog home

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# 13 | Yorkshire Terrier

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 13 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Very small terrier; alert, curious, and often confident.

**Coat and grooming:** Long silky coat needs brushing and planned trims; check teeth and nails routinely.

**Daily activity and care:** Short walks and indoor play can help, but training and enrichment are still needed. Use care around larger dogs and rough handling.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

A small home may work if the dog receives daily attention and safe handling. Ask how the individual responds to children and other pets.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Yorkshire Terrier | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Teach cooperative grooming and calm carrying. Ask a veterinarian about dental prevention, safe body condition, and suitable harness fit.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

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# 14 | Australian Shepherd

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 14 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Medium herding dog; often energetic, observant, and eager to learn.

**Coat and grooming:** Medium double coat; brush regularly, especially during shedding.

**Daily activity and care:** Plan daily activity plus mental work such as training, scent games, or structured sport. Provide downtime to prevent constant arousal.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Consider only if the household can support a busy dog and teach children how to interact calmly. Ask about herding or chasing behavior.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Australian Shepherd | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Reward calmness, recall, and leash skills. Arrange secure boundaries and discuss exercise needs with a veterinarian for puppies and adults.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

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# 15 | Doberman Pinscher

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 15 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Large, athletic working companion; typically needs daily engagement.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; simple brushing and routine nail care.

**Daily activity and care:** Combine walks, training, and thinking tasks. Provide predictable company and a comfortable resting place.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit an active, committed owner prepared for training, social contact, and local breed rules. Ask about the dog’s confidence and alone-time history.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Doberman Pinscher | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Teach calm greeting, settle, and cooperative care. Ask a veterinarian which cardiac and other health screenings fit the dog's history and age.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 16 | Pembroke Welsh Corgi

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 16 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small herding dog with a sturdy build; alert and often busy.

**Coat and grooming:** Weather-resistant double coat; regular brushing and seasonal shedding management.

**Daily activity and care:** Offer daily walks and short training games. Monitor body condition and avoid repeated high-impact jumping.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Can fit a range of homes if barking, herding tendencies, and daily activity needs are managed. Ask about stairs and furniture access.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Pembroke Welsh Corgi | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Train polite greetings, recall, and calm behavior around movement. Ask a veterinarian about weight, back/joint comfort, and safe exercise.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

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• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 17 | Miniature Schnauzer

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 17 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small, lively terrier-type companion; often alert and vocal.

**Coat and grooming:** Wiry coat benefits from brushing and regular clipping or hand-stripping by a skilled groomer.

**Daily activity and care:** Daily walks, play, and sniffing games support wellbeing. Plan for barking management through training, not punishment.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit someone who wants a small but engaged dog and can keep a grooming schedule. Check noise expectations in apartments.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Miniature Schnauzer | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Reward quiet behavior, recall, and gentle grooming. Ask about skin, dental, and other care based on the dog's own history.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 18 | Boxer

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 18 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Medium-to-large playful working dog; often energetic and people-focused.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; simple brushing and routine skin checks.

**Daily activity and care:** Provide daily activity and short training sessions, balanced with rest. Avoid intense exercise in hot or humid conditions.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit an active home ready for a strong, enthusiastic dog. Ask about jumping, impulse control, and the dog’s heat tolerance.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Boxer | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Teach four paws on the floor, leash manners, and settle. Discuss breathing, heart screening, and safe exercise with a veterinarian.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 19 | Pomeranian

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 19 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Tiny companion spitz; alert, lively, and often vocal.

**Coat and grooming:** Profuse double coat; brush regularly and use a groomer familiar with the coat.

**Daily activity and care:** Short walks and indoor games help; protect from rough handling, temperature extremes, and escape gaps.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

A small dog still needs training, company, and grooming. Ask about barking, handling tolerance, and compatibility with young children.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Pomeranian | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Practice cooperative brushing and safe harness use. Ask a veterinarian about dental care, weight, and exercise appropriate to size.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 20 | Bernese Mountain Dog

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 20 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Large mountain working breed; usually enjoys companionship and moderate activity.

**Coat and grooming:** Long double coat; frequent brushing, with heavier seasonal shedding.

**Daily activity and care:** Offer steady walks, sniffing, and training; keep outings comfortable in warm weather. Provide a roomy resting spot.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Consider size, grooming, transport, housing, and veterinary costs. Ask about the dog’s comfort with heat, stairs, and handling.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Bernese Mountain Dog | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Teach leash manners early and use ramps or assistance where needed. Ask a veterinarian about joint care, growth, and breed-related screening.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 21 | Shih Tzu

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 21 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small companion; usually enjoys close company and gentle activity.

**Coat and grooming:** Long coat requires daily combing or a shorter trim with regular grooming.

**Daily activity and care:** Offer short walks, play, and indoor enrichment. Keep the face and coat clean and watch comfort during warm weather.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit a home able to provide companionship and frequent grooming. Ask how the dog handles eye/face cleaning and being alone.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Shih Tzu | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use patient reward-based training. Ask a veterinarian about eyes, dental care, breathing, and safe activity.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

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# 22 | Great Dane

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 22 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Giant companion; needs ample space, calm handling, and steady training.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; simple brushing, but routine nail care and comfortable bedding matter.

**Daily activity and care:** Use relaxed walks and low-impact play suited to age. Plan safe access to vehicles and furniture; do not force strenuous exercise in puppies.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Evaluate adult size, costs, transport, housing, and lifespan considerations before choosing. Ask about comfort around visitors and other dogs.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Great Dane | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Train leash skills and settle early. Discuss growth, joints, heart health, and feeding schedule with a veterinarian.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

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# 23 | Boston Terrier

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 23 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small companion; cheerful and compact, with a short muzzle.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; minimal brushing and routine skin and eye checks.

**Daily activity and care:** Choose gentle walks in cooler conditions and watch for breathing difficulty or overheating.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Can suit city living if the dog’s exercise, company, and heat-management needs are met. Ask about sleep, breathing, and activity tolerance.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Boston Terrier | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use a comfortable harness and reward calm leash behavior. Ask a veterinarian about airway, eyes, weight, and exercise limits.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

Bring all available records and ask the veterinarian to review vaccines, parasite prevention, dental care, nutrition and body condition, exercise limits, spay/neuter timing if relevant, and any screening suggested by the dog's age, history, and breed. Ask which signs need urgent care. Do not start supplements or change diet based only on a breed description.

## Before bringing the dog home

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# 24 | Chihuahua

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 24 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Tiny companion; can be lively and devoted, with varied coat types.

**Coat and grooming:** Smooth or long coat; grooming needs depend on coat, plus regular dental care.

**Daily activity and care:** Provide daily engagement and safe outdoor access. Protect from cold and supervise around larger animals.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Small size does not mean low effort. Consider safe handling, child supervision, barking, and confidence-building.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Chihuahua | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use gentle social exposure and reward-based training. Ask a veterinarian about teeth, weight, warmth, and safe equipment fit.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

Bring all available records and ask the veterinarian to review vaccines, parasite prevention, dental care, nutrition and body condition, exercise limits, spay/neuter timing if relevant, and any screening suggested by the dog's age, history, and breed. Ask which signs need urgent care. Do not start supplements or change diet based only on a breed description.

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# 25 | Havanese

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 25 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small companion; often social and responsive to people.

**Coat and grooming:** Silky or wavy coat needs frequent brushing and scheduled trims.

**Daily activity and care:** Offer daily play, walks, and short learning games. Build alone-time skills gradually and kindly.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit a household where someone can provide interaction and coat care. Ask how the dog copes with visitors and absences.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Havanese | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Teach calm greeting, recall, and cooperative grooming. Ask the vet about dental, eye, and coat-related care for this individual.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 26 | Border Collie

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 26 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Highly capable herding dog; commonly needs substantial mental and physical activity.

**Coat and grooming:** Medium double coat; brush regularly, especially during shedding.

**Daily activity and care:** Plan purposeful daily work: training, scent games, or an appropriate sport, plus recovery time. Prevent chasing rehearsals around bikes or children.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Best considered by an active, experienced household that enjoys daily training. Ask about sensitivity, motion-chasing, and settling.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Border Collie | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use humane reward-based training, safe boundaries, and impulse-control games. Discuss exercise and growth with a veterinarian.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 27 | English Springer Spaniel

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 27 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Medium sporting spaniel; active, social, and often enjoys field-like activity.

**Coat and grooming:** Feathered coat needs regular brushing and checks for burrs; ears need routine monitoring.

**Daily activity and care:** Provide daily walks, sniffing, retrieving, and training. Balance activity with calm rest.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May fit an active family prepared for coat and ear care. Ask about energy level and response to birds, dogs, and time alone.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# English Springer Spaniel | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Train recall and loose-leash walking. Ask a vet about ear care, weight, and breed-relevant health screening.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

Bring all available records and ask the veterinarian to review vaccines, parasite prevention, dental care, nutrition and body condition, exercise limits, spay/neuter timing if relevant, and any screening suggested by the dog's age, history, and breed. Ask which signs need urgent care. Do not start supplements or change diet based only on a breed description.

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# 28 | Miniature American Shepherd

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 28 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small-to-medium herding dog; intelligent and often energetic.

**Coat and grooming:** Double coat; brush routinely and expect seasonal shedding.

**Daily activity and care:** Offer learning tasks, movement, and a clear rest routine. Provide secure outdoor management and avoid encouraging constant alert behavior.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May fit an active home that can train and provide mental work. Ask about herding instincts, barking, and comfort with strangers.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Miniature American Shepherd | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use reward-based training for recall, settle, and calm greetings. Ask the vet about joint and eye screening relevant to the dog.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

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• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 29 | Shetland Sheepdog

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 29 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small herding breed; attentive, trainable, and sometimes vocal.

**Coat and grooming:** Long double coat; brush regularly, with extra attention to feathering and shedding.

**Daily activity and care:** Provide walks and short training games. Teach calm responses to doorbells, movement, and visitors.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit someone who enjoys grooming and training and can manage barking. Ask about sensitivity and experience with children.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Shetland Sheepdog | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use quiet, positive exposure and reward check-ins. Ask about eye and other recommended breed screening with a veterinarian.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 30 | Siberian Husky

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 30 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Medium sledding breed; energetic, independent, and often inclined to roam.

**Coat and grooming:** Dense double coat sheds heavily, especially seasonally; avoid shaving without veterinary direction.

**Daily activity and care:** Plan daily exercise, secure fencing, and enrichment. Use leash management; recall may be challenging around distractions.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Choose only if you can handle escape prevention, shedding, exercise, and possible vocalizing. Ask about prey drive and alone-time behavior.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Siberian Husky | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Practice harnessed leash skills and secure routines. Discuss heat management and safe exercise with a veterinarian.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 31 | Brittany

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 31 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Medium sporting dog; athletic and often keen to work with people.

**Coat and grooming:** Short-to-medium coat; routine brushing and ear checks.

**Daily activity and care:** Offer daily activity, sniffing, retrieving, and training. Secure leash or fence management matters around wildlife.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May fit an active household that includes the dog in outdoor life. Ask about energy, sensitivity, and comfort settling indoors.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Brittany | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Reward recall, calm greetings, and rest. Ask a veterinarian to tailor activity and screening to age and family history.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 32 | Belgian Malinois

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 32 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Highly driven working dog; typically requires extensive structured engagement.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; regular brushing and routine nail care.

**Daily activity and care:** Needs purposeful daily training and activity, with thoughtful rest and professional guidance where appropriate.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Not a casual first-dog choice. Consider experience, time, secure management, household safety, and access to a qualified trainer.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Belgian Malinois | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use humane, structured training; do not rely on harsh corrections. Discuss suitable activity and health checks with a veterinarian.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 33 | Cocker Spaniel

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 33 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small-to-medium sporting companion; often social and active.

**Coat and grooming:** Long silky coat and ears need regular brushing and grooming.

**Daily activity and care:** Offer walks, play, and sniffing games. Keep ears dry and clean as recommended by a veterinarian.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit a household able to maintain grooming and ear care. Ask about handling tolerance, noise sensitivity, and alone-time.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Cocker Spaniel | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Practice gentle ear and coat handling with rewards. Ask about ears, eyes, teeth, and appropriate health screening.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

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# 34 | Basset Hound

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 34 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Low-slung scent hound; curious and often persistent when following smells.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; check long ears and skin folds routinely.

**Daily activity and care:** Use slow sniff walks and food puzzles. Keep on leash, monitor weight, and avoid repeated stairs if uncomfortable.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit a calmer home that accepts scent-led walks and possible hound vocalizing. Ask about mobility and ear-care history.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Basset Hound | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use harness and gentle reward training. Ask a vet about weight, mobility, ear care, and safe exercise.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 35 | English Cocker Spaniel

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 35 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Compact sporting spaniel; active, affectionate, and scent-oriented.

**Coat and grooming:** Silky feathering needs regular brushing and professional trims; check ears after outings.

**Daily activity and care:** Plan daily walks, play, and training. Offer sniffing opportunities and calm rest.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Consider grooming costs and activity needs. Ask whether the dog is from a show or working line, while evaluating the individual, not labels alone.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# English Cocker Spaniel | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Train recall, leash manners, and handling tolerance. Ask a veterinarian about ear, eye, dental, and family-history concerns.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

Bring all available records and ask the veterinarian to review vaccines, parasite prevention, dental care, nutrition and body condition, exercise limits, spay/neuter timing if relevant, and any screening suggested by the dog's age, history, and breed. Ask which signs need urgent care. Do not start supplements or change diet based only on a breed description.

## Before bringing the dog home

■ Confirm landlord / HOA and local rules ■ Choose a primary veterinarian ■ Prepare food, water, ID, leash, and safe rest area ■ Plan daily care and backup care ■ Set a realistic grooming and training budget ■ Arrange gradual introductions to people and pets

## Reader reminder

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# 36 | Vizsla

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 36 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Athletic, short-coated sporting dog; often close to people and high energy.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; low brushing needs, routine nail and skin care.

**Daily activity and care:** Needs regular exercise, sniffing, and learning, plus gradual alone-time practice.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May fit active owners who can include the dog in daily routines. Ask about separation, exercise, and ability to settle.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Vizsla | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use reward-based training and safe recall work. Ask a vet about activity, joints, and appropriate screening.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 37 | Maltese

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 37 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Tiny companion; affectionate and often enjoys indoor companionship.

**Coat and grooming:** Long coat needs frequent combing or regular trims; clean facial hair gently.

**Daily activity and care:** Short walks and interactive indoor play support activity. Provide company and safe handling.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit a smaller home if grooming, dental care, and supervised interaction are planned. Ask about comfort with children and other animals.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Maltese | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Practice brushing, gentle handling, and short training sessions. Ask the veterinarian about teeth, eyes, and weight.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

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• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 38 | Pug

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 38 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Small companion with a short muzzle; playful but may be heat-sensitive.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat sheds; facial folds and eyes need routine care advised by a vet.

**Daily activity and care:** Keep activity gentle and in cool weather. Monitor breathing and avoid excess weight.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Choose with a clear plan for veterinary care and warm-weather limits. Ask about breathing during sleep and exercise.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Pug | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Use a well-fitted harness. Ask a vet about airway, eyes, skin folds, weight, and safe exercise; seek urgent care for distress.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

Bring all available records and ask the veterinarian to review vaccines, parasite prevention, dental care, nutrition and body condition, exercise limits, spay/neuter timing if relevant, and any screening suggested by the dog's age, history, and breed. Ask which signs need urgent care. Do not start supplements or change diet based only on a breed description.

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# 39 | Collie

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 39 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Medium-to-large herding companion; often responsive and family-oriented.

**Coat and grooming:** Rough and smooth coat varieties; grooming needs differ, but regular brushing is needed.

**Daily activity and care:** Provide daily walks and learning; encourage calm behavior around movement and visitors.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

May suit a family wanting a responsive dog, with room for activity and grooming. Ask about sensitivity and herding behavior.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Collie | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Reward gentle greetings, recall, and settling. Ask the veterinarian about eye, skin, and other family-history screening.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

• What support is available after adoption or purchase, and what happens if the placement is not a good fit?

## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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# 40 | Mastiff

**AKC U.S. registration rank: 40 of 202 breeds (2025)**

## At a glance

Giant guardian-type dog; generally benefits from calm routines and careful management.

**Coat and grooming:** Short coat; simple brushing, with drool and bedding care to consider.

**Daily activity and care:** Use measured low-impact walks and positive training. Plan for comfortable transport and sufficient space.

## Who may enjoy this breed?

Consider adult size, strength, drool, costs, and housing restrictions. Meet the dog and assess handling and visitor behavior.

## A realistic first-week routine

Keep the first days calm. Set up a safe resting place, predictable meals and toilet breaks, and a secure leash-and-ID routine. Let the dog explore at its pace. Use brief positive training and quiet enrichment; avoid overwhelming introductions. Write down what the dog eats, how it sleeps, when it toilets, and what situations it finds easy or difficult.

# Mastiff | Choosing and preparing

## Training and home setup

Teach leash manners and cooperative care early. Ask a vet about joints, body condition, growth, and safe exercise.

## Questions for the shelter, rescue, foster caregiver, or breeder

• What does this individual dog enjoy, fear, or find stressful? What have you observed around children, visitors, dogs, cats, handling, and time alone?

• What food, daily routine, grooming, and training cues are familiar? Can you provide current veterinary, vaccine, medication, and screening records?

• Has the dog shown a behavior or health need that requires a training plan, grooming appointment, or veterinary follow-up soon?

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## Veterinary visit: topics to personalize

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