

## In Search of the Perfect Dog

*How do you know which dog is right for you?*

While there is a certain idealistic charm about wandering amongst dogs at a pet shop or rescue agency and waiting for one to have the right look in its eyes, reality can hit a little too hard when the family pet is selected in this manner.

“Many people are interested only in the look of a dog, “said DOGS Victoria President Peter Frost, “And many other important characteristics can be overlooked. It is important to find a dog that suits your age and stage of life. A little bit of research can go a long way when choosing your new best friend for the next decade.”

There are many pet organisations that can help you make this decision, and Mr Ford suggests the following considerations before determining which breed or type of dog will best suit your lifestyle:

- How much space do I have available for a dog? *Find a dog whose energy level and size will suit the amount of space you can provide.*
- How much time can I commit to my dog? *Some dogs require a lot of attention, exercise or grooming and others are more independent and low-maintenance. All dogs need training, socialisation and regular exercise.*
- What kind of activities do my family and I enjoy? *If you are involved in outdoor activities, you’ll need an energetic dog with endurance. If you are more of the homebody type, then you want a dog that will be happy to laze around the house with you.*
- The age of those who will be interacting with the dog is also important as some breeds are more tolerant of children than others. It is important to NEVER leave young children alone with any dog or puppy.
- Am I a first time dog owner? *Some breeds can be very challenging to train and may not be suitable for those inexperienced with dog ownership.*

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**A DOGS Victoria representative can be made available for interviews on a variety of topics including training tips, choosing the right dog, and general dog information.**