



Finding the Right Breed for You

So you have decided you are genuinely ready to add a dog to your family. The next step is working out the breed of dog that will best suit your family and lifestyle.

With over 200 Dogs Australia recognised breeds to choose from, it may seem daunting to find the right breed for you. Large or small? Active or lazy? Long-haired or short? Easily trained or a little independent? These are only some of the many characteristics you will need to consider before committing to your new best friend.

Although many people are drawn to a breed based on how it looks, this may not be the best way to select your canine companion for the next 10-15 years. Every breed has its own temperament, activity level, and set of needs.

You want to make sure that you know precisely what that cute little puppy will grow into, and you want to make sure that you are set up to provide everything that the puppy needs to live a long and healthy life.

Most dog breeds have been developed over hundreds of years, often with a specific task in mind, so understanding the history and development of the breed will help you understand what you might expect. For example, breeds developed for herding are likely to be very active and require more exercise than dogs bred to be companions. Dogs bred for guarding roles are more likely to be wary of strangers. Dogs bred for catching and killing vermin are going to be tenacious in temperament and more likely to dig in your garden.

To understand more about the development of breeds and to find out more about Pedigree and Purebred Dogs, you can visit the Dogs Victoria website – www.dogsvictoria.org.au

Where should you start?

Take a Quiz

The internet is full of information about the various breeds. There are several excellent online 'Breed Selection Quizzes' you can try.

These provide some suggested breeds based on your answers to questions such as where you live, how active you are, how long you are away from home each day and the amount of grooming and training you are prepared to do. They also take into account whether or not you have children or elderly people living with you and whether you already have other pets.

These quizzes are a great place to start and can narrow down the search for you or maybe highlight a breed you had not even considered. A good one to try is the [Dogs Australia - 'Breed Matcher'](#).

Browse the Dogs Victoria Breed Directory

The Dogs Victoria website has loads of information about all Dogs Australia (Australian National Kennel Council) registered breeds. There is information on their size, temperament, activity and grooming requirements and links to breed clubs and breeders.

Each breed has an official 'Breed Standard', which can be considered a written description of the perfect example of the breed.

A link to the Breed Standard for each breed can be found in the Breed Directory.





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Visit a Show

Most weekends, somewhere in Victoria, there will be a Dogs Victoria Sanctioned Dog Show. Visiting a show allows you to see actual dogs of the breed and the opportunity to speak to breeders and those that live with the breed.

The Dogs Victoria website has an 'Events Calendar' that lists all upcoming events, and you can access the Show Schedules via our website. The Schedules list the location of the show along with the starting time.

It is important to note that at an 'All Breeds' show, the dog breeds are judged in alphabetical order, so if you are interested in a breed starting with A, B or C, you will need to be there early!

Attend a Breed Club event

Many breeds have a Breed Club made up of breeders and owners that are super-passionate about their breed. Breed Clubs not only organise shows, but many hold other events for members who are not interested in showing.

These events can be a fabulous place to see a LOT of dogs of one breed and to meet and chat with people who live with the breed. You might even get the opportunity to see the dogs doing the activity they were bred for.

If you have a specific breed in mind, you can contact the relevant breed club for information about training days, walks or other activities they may be hosting. The Dogs Victoria website has a listing of affiliated Breed Clubs so you can find the club for the breed you are interested in.

Many of the breed clubs also have their own websites, which are another fantastic source of information about the breed.

Most breed club websites contain detailed information about the breed, photos and, of course, important information about any relevant health issues. If you have your heart set on a breed, you will want to know what health testing or screening is done so that you can ask the right questions when talking to breeders.

Does someone in your family have allergies?

Some breeds are better than others if you have someone in your family that suffers allergies. Dogs Victoria has a fact sheet about reducing the risk of allergy by choosing low-shedding breeds.

Where to next?

So, you have found your perfect match. Now it is time for you to find a reputable breeder. Choosing a good breeder is just as important as choosing the right breed. There are many pitfalls, especially for first-time pet owners.

Dogs Victoria has several fact sheets that can help you, including 'Questions to ask Your Breeder', 'What to expect from a Reputable Breeder' and 'Identifying Puppy Scams and Puppy Farms'.

Hopefully, you will find your perfect pet and a breeder who has done everything they can to make sure your new family member is happy and healthy and wants to ensure that the puppy they have bred is right for you.

