Hi Pup!
A Guide to Finding Your new Dog and Enjoying the First Few Weeks

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Greetings!

Adding a four-legged friend to your family is a really big step and is not something that should be taken lightly. Consider this, your new pet will most likely be with you for 10 to 15 years or more, depending on the breed, so you want to be prepared prior to deciding who’s moving in!

This checklist-style guide is designed to help you make the right choice in your new companion and to provide you with some of the essential information you will need to have a successful first several weeks.

Questions Answered

1. How do I pick my new dog?
2. What supplies do I need to have when I bring my new dog home?
3. My puppy’s home, now what?
4. Should I crate train?
5. How do I pick a veterinarian?
6. When and how do I choose a trainer?

I hope you find it helpful!

Karin
**Chapter 1 - How Do I Pick My New Dog?**

You notice that this chapter is not called, "How to Pick a Puppy" because the very first step of this 4 step process for choosing your companion is to decide if you really want a puppy or if an older dog is the better option.

**Step 1 – Decide if you want a puppy or more mature dog.**

Here's a chart to help you decide.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Puppy</strong></td>
<td>- You can build a relationship with the animal from a young age.</td>
<td>- You are in charge of housebreaking and must deal with teething, nipping puppy energy.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- You are in control of providing the foundation for training and socialization.</td>
<td>- Raising a puppy requires a lot of time and patience. You need to be present and attentive during the milestones in learning.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- There are costs involved that may be more than you think! The puppy vaccine series can be expensive.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Older Dog</strong></td>
<td>- Adult dogs are over the puppy zoomies, and tend to be calmer and therefore easier to assimilate into your family.</td>
<td>- An adult dog has already gone through socialization period, so changes require behavior modification</td>
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<td>- They may already have some training (house-breaking, leash walking, and general commands)</td>
<td>- An adult dog may have bad habits that will need to be addressed through training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- They may show gratitude for being in a loving home.</td>
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**My Choice is to go with □Puppy □Older dog**
**Step 2 - Decide between breeder and rescue organization**

Now that you have decided between a puppy and an older dog, you have a number of other decisions to make!

You must determine where you will get your dog. Here are some considerations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breeder</th>
<th>Rescue</th>
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<tr>
<td>- A good breeder will have health checks and guarantees</td>
<td>- When you get your puppy through a rescue operation you are most likely saving his/her life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- A breeder will have lots of information about the breed</td>
<td>- There are many gorgeous and well behaved dogs in rescue</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The breeder will have insight as to the adult personality and temperament of the puppy based on the personality and temperament of the parents.</td>
<td>- Adopting a rescue dog helps future rescue animals by providing resources back to the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The breeder will be familiar with the genetics and lineage of the dog</td>
<td>- The cost of a rescue dog may be significantly less than choosing a dog through a breeder.</td>
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**My Choice is to go with**  
- Breeder  
- Rescue Organization

The Driven Dog
Step 3 - Decide on a breed.

Now that you know how you want to get your dog, it’s time to decide on the breed you want.

**My advice is this: DO NOT CHOOSE A PUPPY BASED ON LOOKS!** It’s critical that you understand the basic characteristics of the dog you want and then find the breed that will closely match those characteristics. If you’re a couch potato, don’t choose a high energy dog who needs to walk and run throughout the day. Similarly, if you don’t like barking, don’t choose a breed that is prone to bark. Do your homework and find the best match.

Here’s a quick breakdown of the different groups of dogs. Find the traits you want and then use your favorite search engine to research specific breeds within the group.

**Terriers**
Vocal, High energy, Confident, Courageous

**Herding dogs**
High energy, High strung, Need a job or else they will create own job

**Toy Dogs**
Can be vocal, Happy to hang out and chill with you, Lower energy, Bred to be companions
Hounds
Independent thinkers, Can be more difficult to train than other types, Many have a ‘bey’ or howl that some find annoying

Non-Sporting Dogs
These are all of the other dogs, like the miscellaneous category...Lots of various personalities and energy levels

Sporting Dogs
Active, Require Lots of Exercise, Very Smart and trainable

Working Dogs
High energy, High strung, Need a job, Intelligent

My Choice is to go with a ______________________ type of dog.
The breeds I think are most compatible are

__________________________________________, ____________________________________, ____________________________________
Step 4- Find the Right Breeder or Rescue Organization

Almost done! Your final step in the “how do I pick my new dog” process is to find the breeder or rescue organization so you can pick out your dog!

To find a breeder, do a number of internet searches to come up with a list of potential operations that specialize in the breed you want. Contact each breeder and ask the following questions:

1. Are parents on site, can you meet them?
2. Can you visit and look at the puppies for sale?
3. Do they do a health test on parents prior to breeding, and have the puppies seen a vet?
4. What are their contract terms?

Similarly, to find a rescue operation, do a search online or ask friends who have dogs who came from a shelter or agency. Once you have your list of options, contact each one and ask these questions

1. Is the operation/agency licensed and registered?
2. Where do the rescue animals come from?
3. Are the dogs adopted-out with full vetting and spay/neuter?
4. What are their contract terms?

As with choosing the right breed, choosing the right breeder or rescue operation is important! Take your time and be patient. Find the best option for you.

☐ I’ve done the research and found the best source for my new dog.

Name: ____________________________

Phone Number: ______________________

Web Address: ______________________
Chapter 2 - What Supplies Do I Need When I bring My New Dog Home?

While there are thousands of accessories that you can have on hand for your new arrival, there are a few that are essential to getting your animal settled in quickly.

- **A Crate**
  You’ll find many types of crates at your local petstore and online. Go with one that has a divider in it so that you can keep the space cozy for your pup yet allows more space as the dog grows. Remember that your puppy will be most comfortable in a space just big enough for her to stand up and turn around.

- **2 Dog Bowls**
  While this is not a monumental decision, do spend a bit of time choosing the right bowls for your pup. I recommend getting bowls that are pretty heavy so that they don’t move around when your dog is eating or drinking. The last thing you want to do is mop your floor after every meal! Plastic should be avoided, as these can harbor bacteria and cause puppy acne. If you have chosen a large breed, consider an elevated dog bowl stand to help reduce the possibility of bloat and neck strain.

- **The right dog food**
  Go to [http://dogfoodadvisor.com](http://dogfoodadvisor.com) and look through the ratings they give each brand. They are non-biased and explain the why’s! You’ll find information about ingredients, nutrients, calories, and much, much more. You should also consult your breeder (if you went that route) for recommendations.

- **A Safe collar and leash**
  I recommend a “martingale” collar or a “flat” collar. The martingale collar is made with two loops. The larger loop is slipped onto the dog’s neck and a leash is then clipped to the smaller loop. When the dog tries to pull, the tension on the leash pulls the small loop taut, which makes the large loop smaller and tighter on the neck, thus preventing escape. Properly fitted, the collar will be comfortably loose when not in use.

  A flat collar is a simple collar that is attached with a buckle or quick release plastic clasp. You can find these collars at all pet stores. Make sure this is not so tight that you can’t fit 2 fingers in between the collar and the dog’s neck, but not so loose that it will slip over
the dog's head. This can be dangerous if your dog decides to put the brakes on and back up out of it!

Choose a strong, sturdy 6’ leash. Avoid retractable leashes, as these can be confusing when teaching your dog not to pull, and they do not offer good control.

Poop bags
Not a lot of explanation needed here… For everyone’s health – including your own dog’s – pick up your dog’s poop and dispose of it properly. In many cities, it’s the law.

Safe toys
A must have is an appropriately sized Kong Dog Toy. This super-bouncy natural rubber toy is great for dogs who like to chew. You can stuff it with healthy treats and even freeze it to keep your dog happily working and out of trouble for long periods of time. Opt for the black one, for extra peace of mind, it is far more durable and safe than the red ones!

Nylabones or other edible chews appropriate for puppies, make sure they’re the right size.

Do not give your dog stuffed animals or other stuffed toys! You don’t want to confuse him into thinking that other soft things -- slippers, cushions, dog beds, your children’s toys – are meant to be chewed!

With these essentials on hand you’ll be ready to bring your new dog or puppy home.
Chapter 3 - My Puppy's Home, Now What?

Now the fun begins! And, the work begins, too! Whether you have a new puppy or an older dog, you and your animal will have some learning to do. With the right frame of mind and some discipline, the education will be a fun and happy one.

☐ Establish rules right away.
Now that your new dog is at home you want to set boundaries and establish rules right away! You are the parent, you decide what's off limits.

→ Is the dog welcome on the furniture? Be forward thinking about this, especially if your pup is a big breed!
→ Are certain rooms off limits? Keep them off limits from day 1.
→ Where will you take your pup to go potty? Introduce him to that spot right away.

☐ Set a routine and schedule.
Your dog will respond best if he knows what to expect! A consistent routine will help him to feel comfortable and safe.

→ Set a time for feeding
→ Choose times for walks and potty breaks
→ Establish a schedule for water and bedtime

☐ Start shaping a foundation for good behavior.
You've put time and energy into finding the right dog for your family, continue your good behavior by making sure your animal has good behavior! If you've brought home a new, young puppy, formal training isn't necessary yet, HOWEVER creating a foundation for good behavior is essential!

→ Reward desired behavior with a clear positive marker such as "Yes!" or "Good!"
→ Ignore or clearly mark unacceptable behavior with a verbal NO.
→ Don't send mixed signals. Be clear and firm with your words so that there is no misunderstanding what is allowed and what is not allowed.

By following these 3 simple guidelines from day 1 you are setting your dog and the members of your family up for success.
Chapter 4 - Why Crate Train?

I am asked this question from every new dog owner. To some people it seems odd, to others it may even seem cruel, but I guarantee that crate training is a good thing, in fact a very good thing, for you and for your dog.

Here are 4 reasons I recommend it so highly.

1. A comfortable, crate gives your dog a place of his own own. It is a calm, relaxing place where he can hang out and he will accept it happily.

2. A comfortable crate means that you can relax too when you leave the dog home alone. You know that he is confined to a safe, comfortable place.

3. The crate helps eliminate self-rewarding destructive behavior like chewing on shoes or furniture… It prevents the dog from getting into mischief when no one is home to supervise, and since it is comfortable, the dog is content while you’re away.

4. A crate will help with house training. Dogs, even puppies, prefer not to go potty where they sleep. This means that you can use the crate as part of the potty training process, teaching the pup to “hold it” while strengthening the bladder muscle. The key is having the right size crate, and proper feeding, watering, and potty schedule, so the dog doesn’t have the option to relieve himself inside.

☐ I will crate train my new dog.
Chapter 5 - How Do I Choose the right Veterinarian?

Choosing a vet for your animal could be compared to choosing a doctor for yourself! You want to make sure you find someone who is qualified, who you can trust and an environment that will be healthy for your animal.

There are three steps to finding the right vet:

1. First, ask friends, neighbors, or people you meet at the dog park for their recommendations. Consider your location and the location of the vet’s office and create a list of viable options.
2. Next, go online and look up the doctors who were recommended to you. Visit their websites, and read the reviews on Yelp and Google. Make a short list of viable candidates.
3. Finally, visit the offices. Ask yourself the following questions – you may have others too!
   1. Does the facility look and smell clean?
   2. Does the equipment look clean and safe?
   3. Does the staff make you feel comfortable and welcome your pet?
   4. Do you feel that they listen to and address your concerns?
   5. Do they seem to spend the time necessary to answer your questions thoughtfully?

Over the course of your pet’s life you will no doubt spend quite a few hours at the vet. Your goal is to find a place where you are comfortable with the doctors, staff, and waiting area and where your pet will be well taken care of.

I have found the right vet.

Name: ______________________________

Phone Number: ____________________

Web Address: ______________________

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Chapter 6 - How to Pick the Right Trainer

Finding a trainer is much like finding a veterinarian. You will want to get advice from people you know and trust and you’ll want to do research online to find a list of good candidates.

While looking at trainers you want to understand their methods and determine if you are comfortable with them. There are lots of philosophies in dog training and you want to find one that makes sense to you.

You dog’s success is dependent on your commitment to the training plan because in essence, both you and your animal are getting trained! Make sure you find a trainer and program that are the right fit.

Today you have several options for training your dog.

- **In Person Training**
  You and your pet can attend group classes with a certified trainer at a training facility or pet store. Or you can work with a trainer 1 on 1 at the trainer’s facility, your home, or a public location.

- **Online Video-Based Training**
  Taught by a certified trainer and hosted online, a virtual training course allows you to go at your own pace while still receiving excellent advice and feedback.

You and your dog can be equally successful with either training method, so choose the one that fits your time constraints and location, and then commit to it.

☐ I would like to learn more about the Driven Dog group and on-line training programs taught by Karin Chan, IACP- CDT
In Person Training & Boarding - http://thedrivendog.com

Online Training Programs - http://thedrivendog.com/onlinetraining

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