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## SELECTING A DOG

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If you choose a puppy, be prepared for several weeks to months of housetraining and some initial medical expenses for wellness exams, vaccinations and neutering. If you plan your puppy's arrival when there is sufficient time to socialize and housetrain it, your puppy will learn faster and more likely grow into the adult dog you've always wanted. If your community offers puppy classes, they are a great way to socialize your new companion and help it learn some basic commands. Frequent, positive contact with people and other dogs early in the puppy's life enhances its future interactions with your family, other people, and their dogs. Any dog can become bored and potentially destructive if left alone all day without an outlet for its exercise, exploratory, and social needs. Therefore, set aside time each day for activities that are fun for you and your dog such as walking, playing, petting, grooming, etc. Remember that dogs are highly social creatures, and isolating a dog to the backyard with no interaction is one of the worst things you can do. Before selecting your new dog, research the breed characteristic to make sure they match your family and lifestyle.

### New Puppy Tips

- Six to 10 weeks is considered an ideal age for a puppy to move to a new home.
- Spaying or neutering your new pet is an important part of responsible pet ownership. Talk to your veterinarian about the best time to have your puppy spayed or neutered.
- When possible, meet the puppy's parents—their temperaments are often good indicators of what the puppy's temperament will be.

- If you are getting a puppy as a second pet, remember that some older pets may be less tolerant of a puppy's behavior. Ask your veterinarian or dog trainer about introducing your puppy into its new animal family.
- Crate training can be an effective method for training your puppy. Ask your veterinarian or dog trainer for more information.