

THE SMART PUPPY AND DOG BUYER'S CHECKLIST

Use this handy checklist to help you through the process of finding, bringing home and caring for your new puppy or dog.

Being prepared

- Have you thought about whether you would prefer a puppy or a dog and what is involved with each?
- Do you have time to walk, feed and provide company and attention to a puppy or a dog every day?
- Have you done the sums to work out whether you can afford to care for a dog for the next 15 years?
- Have you checked that you are allowed to have a pet in your home?

Type of dog

- Have you decided what type of dog you want; e.g. small, large, active, quiet?
- Have you looked into the inherited diseases and exaggerated features some breeds can suffer from?
- Do you know about the problems some dogs suffer from as a result of inbreeding?

Where to get your dog

- Have you regularly checked your local RSPCA and www.adoptapet.com over time to look for your new best friend?
- If you can't find the right puppy or dog at the RSPCA, have you checked other reputable animal welfare and rescue organisations over time?

If you can't find the right dog to adopt, then you will need to find a good breeder.

- Have you made sure you are not getting a puppy from a puppy farm?
- Will the breeder let you visit the place where the puppy was born and meet the mother dog?
- Are you happy with the living conditions they keep their animals in? Is the mother dog (and father dog, if he's around) happy and healthy?
- Have the puppies been health checked by a veterinarian, vaccinated, microchipped, and treated for worms and fleas? Is there documentation to confirm this?
- Is your puppy bred to be a healthy pet, with a suitable temperament and free from known inherited diseases?
- Does the breeder offer to provide on-going support and information after purchase and do they provide a guarantee?

Caring for your dog

- Have you checked that your home is puppy/dog safe?
- Do you have all the equipment you will need like bedding, a lead and collar, food and water bowls?
- Have you found puppy school and dog training classes to go to in your area that use reward-based training?
- Have you found a vet clinic in your area?
- Do you know about desexing, registration and preventative health care?