

CrossTown Pet Care^{LLC}

Mobile pet grooming service



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A Few Items to Think About When Adopting a New Pet

Adopting a pet is a wonderful idea, but owning one is also associated to having responsibilities. Just because you find a dog to be cute, it does not mean that you have to immediately get it. There are a lot of things that you have to consider before you adopt a pet and bring it to your home.

Some questions should be addressed - such as your lifestyle, size of your home, other people in your home and your availability to spend time with the dog. Dogs are great companions and the right type of dog can also be a good friend for your child(ren). Dogs can also bring peace of mind to their owners by providing a level of security while at home or walking.

Dogs do require time and commitment, as well as an increase in household cleaning. If you have visitors in your house, your dog should eventually be socialized enough to be friendly towards strangers. (If you have a dog for security purposes this may be optional.)

Living conditions are another consideration to keep in mind when choosing a dog. If you have a large house with a yard, most dogs will be just fine. Most dogs need daily exercise and need to go out, so if your house does not have enough indoor or outdoor space, you should consider your availability to take your dog to the dog park. If you are a renter, you should keep in mind that certain breeds may be restricted from rental units. The dogs that might not be permitted include: Akita, American Staffordshire Terrier, Bull Terrier, Chow, Doberman, German Shepherd, Husky, Pit Bull, Presa Canario, Rottweiler and Wolf Hybrid.

How do you do with your financial capabilities? Owning a dog adds to expenses. A dog needs proper food, grooming, veterinarian visits, etc.... A responsible pet owner must not ignore the needs of his/her pet.

All pets benefit from regular grooming services. Some breeds require haircuts. All breeds

need regular baths, nail trims, ear cleaning, and excess hair removal from the paw pads. Sometimes a sanitary path needs to be created for cleanliness. Some pets have unusually dry skin that requires deep conditioning.

Although all dogs should be groomed, different types of dogs have different grooming needs. The various levels of maintenance are explained as follows:

High Maintenance Dogs

Our first group would be what I fondly refer to as the "High Maintenance Dogs". For example, dogs such as poodles, bichons, malteses, shih tzu, pomeranians, labradoodles or anything with naturally long hair will need to be on a regular grooming schedule - on average every 4-6 weeks - plus your regular combing in between to prevent matting. If they are not regularly taken care of, their coat easily turns into one big mat. Once they become a big mat the kindest thing to do is shave them down. I've yet to meet anyone that likes that look. The good news is that the hair will grow back. However, you can prevent matting in the first place by maintaining their coats properly.

Medium-Medium High Maintenance

Next, you have the "Medium to Medium High Maintenance" dogs, such as border collies, golden retrievers, australian shepherds, chow and chow mixes. These breeds also need regular care. They benefit from deshedding and blowing out of the coat in combination with hair styling. Shave downs are also done in lieu of keeping a more natural coat. They easily get matted around their ear, belly and buttock area without the benefit of these treatments.

Medium Maintenance

Then our next group - what I think of as "Medium Maintenance" - would be dogs such as the ever-popular labradors and pugs. While they look and seem maintenance free, anyone who has ever lived with a lab or a pug has probably experienced the lovely household hair that they leave behind. In order to keep it to a minimum but still keep their beautiful natural coat you can get them deshedding treatments in combination with blowing out of the coat. If you want even less hair on your floor, you can get them shaved down. The little hairs on your floor are much less noticeable than those big tumbleweeds of love they tend to produce. The thickness of each dog's coat does vary.

Easy Maintenance

Finally, you have what I like to refer to as the "Easy Keepers" of the world. These guys are really wonderful for the extremely busy households that don't have much time to deal with regular brushing and combing. Types that fit in to this group would be dogs such as min pins, short haired chihuahuas, short haired jack russells, pit bulls, great danes and boxers. Combing will not work, however they could definitely benefit from regular brushing to help any loose hairs fall out and to help spread those coat oils to help promote a nice, healthy and shiny coat. With regular grooming treatments we can also do a little light "de-shedding work" and blowing out of the coat to help rid them of the loose hairs.

ALL dogs should have their ears and nails maintained at minimum on a monthly basis.

Imagine putting on a pair of high heels, but here's the twist, put them on backward and now walk in them. Not a fun thought, huh? A dog walking on nails that are too long affects their foot structure and can put strain on their legs. Those that have dewclaws, need those regularly trimmed as well since they don't touch the ground they are not worn down naturally. We do see dewclaws at times that have grown back around and in to the dogs skin, OUCH!!!

Remember, a groomed pet is a happier and healthier pet. Good luck with your newly adopted dog!

Note: There are several adoption agencies in the Tampa area that have wonderful dogs ready to be loved. Contact information for some of these agencies:

St. Francis Society Animal Rescue
PO Box 261614
Tampa, FL 33685-1614
Phone: 813.830.7251
<http://www.luvamutt.org/animals/dogs>

www.petfinder.com

<http://www.humanesocietytampa.org/>

<http://www.akc.org/breeds/rescue.cfm> *(this links directly to the breed rescue site)*

<http://www.spcatampabay.org>

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