

## Ten questions to ask yourself before getting a dog.

Before selecting a breed, take the time to answer the following:

1. **Why do I want a dog?**
2. **Can I be committed to twelve or more years?**
3. **Do I have the time?**
4. **Do I have the money?**
5. **How long will my dog be alone daily?**
6. **Can my housing accommodate a dog?**
7. **Can I physically care for a dog?**
8. **Are there any life-changing events planned?**
9. **Do I have the patience to have a dog?**
10. **Do I really love dogs?**

We can help you answer these questions, please call.

*It's A Life...Be Responsible*

The release of Disney's '101 Dalmatians' movies focused attention on the Dalmatian breed. Many litters of Dalmatians were bred in anticipation that an increased demand for spotted puppies would mean a profit. While some of these breeders were able to sell their pups, many were not and entire litters were abandoned or turned into shelters. Pups who were sold to unprepared impulse buyers were also abandoned and there were few homes for the unwanted adult dogs. Dalmatian lovers who wanted to help were overwhelmed and disappointed. The only recourse for so many Dals was euthanasia.

Please do not contribute to the problem.  
**Spay or Neuter your pet Dalmatian.**  
If you have bred a litter, take responsibility for all the lives you created and find new homes for any that become homeless.



D.A.L./Dalsavers is a nonprofit IRS 501c(3) national all-volunteer organization providing support and resources for Dalmatian rescue groups.

[www.dalsavers.com](http://www.dalsavers.com)

*It's A Life...Be Responsible*

# It's A Life



# Be Responsible

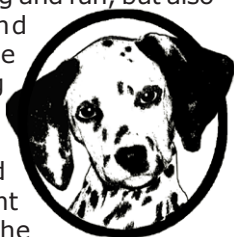
This educational brochure is intended to assist potential dog adopters or buyers.

[www.dalsavers.com](http://www.dalsavers.com)

## Before You Get That Puppy...

The decision to get a puppy should not be made lightly. An adorable puppy can wiggle straight into your heart, but the reality is that a puppy will become a member of your family, requiring a significant amount of your time and your money for many years to come.

The training and socialization of a young pup can be rewarding and fun, but also frustrating and difficult. The time involved in teaching the puppy house manners, proper social behavior and in providing constant supervision until the training "takes" is often underestimated by new puppy owners.



An adult dog may be a good choice for those who do not have the time and energy to work with a puppy. An adult requires less time than a puppy, but still will need daily care, attention and exercise.

Cute puppies bought on the spur of the moment often grow into unmanageable, unwanted dogs who are surrendered to a shelter or to a rescue group or worse, just left by the side of a deserted road. Since there are not enough homes for all the homeless animals in this country, many of these dogs are euthanized.



## What about a Dalmatian?

Dalmatians are generally active, athletic and happy dogs. Adult Dals are 19-24 inches tall and 40-65 pounds; rarely smaller, sometimes larger. Their natural life-span is 12-15 years.

### Coach Dog, Lap Dog

Though they were bred as stable and coach dogs in earlier times, Dalmatians today do best when they are part of the family. They thrive when they are with their humans for several hours a day and most do well in multi-pet households. Short coats make Dals indoor dogs.

As befitting their coach dog history, most Dals love to go places - in the car or with people on foot, horseback, bike, or skates. Many Dals play 'fetch' with a tennis ball or frisbee or enjoy the sport of agility.

Dalmatians are intelligent and creative; they learn quickly when trained with positive reinforcement. As with all large dogs, early obedience training is a must as is active socialization with people and other dogs. Puppy kindergarten is a great way to start.

Urinary stones, and allergies (which appear as skin problems) may affect Dalmatians. Urinary stones can be controlled through diet or may require more extensive treatment.



Approximately 8% of Dalmatians are born deaf in both ears. If you are considering adopting a completely deaf dog, please do extensive research first.

## Where do I find my Dal?

**AKC papers are not proof of quality: get the facts before you buy.**

**Rescue groups** have adult dogs and puppies. Many of these dogs have lived through abusive or neglectful situations and will flourish in a loving, permanent home. Adult dogs bond well to new owners - they know that they are getting a second chance. Rescue groups evaluate dogs for health and temperament and spay/neuter before sending a dog to a new home. Careful screening ensures a good match between adopter and dog.

### For a Dalmatian rescue group:

[www.dalsavers.com](http://www.dalsavers.com)

[www.thedca.org/rescue.html](http://www.thedca.org/rescue.html)

your local kennel club or Humane Society

The other source for a Dalmatian is a **reputable, knowledgeable breeder** who breeds from healthy well-tempered adult dogs. The adults' health should be verified by tests such as BAER (hearing), OFA or Penn-hip (hip dysplasia) and CERF (eye health). The hearing of all puppies should be confirmed by the BAER test.

Look for a breeder with a strong interest in dogs - one who is a member of dog clubs, whose dogs are family pets and more, who can tell you about the parents of the litter and their ancestors and why they chose these dogs as a breeding pair. Responsible breeders will be around for the life of the dog, answering questions, helping with training and problem-solving. They will be willing to take back any dog if you are unable to care for it. Expect a breeder to ask you a lot of questions. Ask the breeder a lot of questions!

### To find a breeder, contact:

Dalmatian Club of America referral:  
Gerri Lightholder phone: 708/687-5447  
email: [referrals@thedca.org](mailto:referrals@thedca.org),  
[www.thedca.org](http://www.thedca.org), or a local kennel club.

**A pet store is not** a good place to obtain a dog. Breeders who care about their puppies want to know about their new homes and NEVER sell through pet stores.