

Why Adopting a Dog is the Best Thing You Can Do

Getting a dog is one of the best decisions that you can you make. You can choose to look for one through a private seller, through an animal store or you can try to find one through the classified ads on social media sites.

But the best way to find a wonderful furry friend is through a shelter. These dogs make the best pets. There are many reasons why, but the most important one is that you're saving a pet from a live of fear, sorrow and possible death.

Shelter Dogs Are Healthier

You might assume that if you buy your dog from a breeder or a pet store that the dog is healthier and will be a better pet than if you get it at a shelter. But that's not true. When you get a puppy or adult dog from a store or through a private seller, you don't have any idea about the condition of the dog at the time you buy it.

Many pet stores get their animals from breeders in conditions that aren't healthy for the animal. Illnesses and diseases are often covered up in order to make the sale. You have to go on the word of a person who wants to sell the animal to make money.

Some of these health issues may not show up until you've bonded with the pet, or until it's too late to get your money back. When money is placed at greater importance than finding a loving home for the dog, you could be buying an animal that simply won't integrate well into your life - or one that has a serious health problem.

Some people assume that when a dog is adopted from a shelter, it's a walking advertisement for health issues. They fear getting a pet that's sick, one that has some kind of expensive issue to deal with or has behavioral problems.

But a shelter is not a revolving door operation. When a dog is first handed over to an animal shelter, it's not immediately released for adoption. Instead, the dog has to remain there while a whole gamut of tests are run.

It's not put up for adoption until these tests are completed. Known medical issues are addressed first. Sometimes when dogs are handed over to the shelter, it's clear they need medical attention.

They might be dealing with something like mange or, in the case of abandoned dogs found on the streets, the animal might have matted fur. It might also have fleas or skin conditions.

The shelter has trained staff including veterinarians who will check for heartworms, intestinal parasites, malnourishment and skin disorders or issues. It also studies the dog's behavior.

If a dog has any problems with his teeth, the shelter will make sure that the dog gets those problems addressed and healed. While the dog is at the shelter, he'll be vaccinated.

Some shelters will also go ahead and microchip a pet. The dog will also get spayed or neutered while it's at the shelter. Any major issues that can be corrected like suturing up wounds or setting broken bones are also fixed.

The cost of these fees are not all transferred to the person adopting the pet. If you had to pay for everything the shelter does yourself, it could easily cost over a thousand dollars.

The dog will also be groomed while he's at the shelter. When you get a dog from a source such as a breeder or pet store, you may not get all the information that you need about the pet in order to be able to provide him with the best care.

Sometimes health conditions are deliberately hidden. But a shelter dog comes to you with his health history. You'll know what the breed of dog is and whether or not it's a pure bred or a mixed breed.

The shelter won't try and hide it if the dog does have any health problems that were noted in the animal's chart when he was first checked in. You'll be told of any issues that will be ongoing for the pet.

So you'll know from the start what you're getting into. Another perk about adopting a shelter dog is that many of them are already housebroken. So you won't have to go

through the stages of teaching your dog how to go to the bathroom outside. Even if the dog isn't yet housetrained, you'll know that ahead of time.

Shelter Dogs May or May Not Be Purebreds

You might think that getting a purebred dog is the best way to choose a pet. You might also believe that you can't find any of those type of dogs at an animal shelter. But shelters get all kinds of dogs, not just mixed breeds.

If you've been avoiding choosing a shelter dog because you want a pure bred, there are a few things you might want to consider. First, you won't know what kind of dog is available until you actually make a trip to the shelter and see.

There may be some dogs listed on their intake page on the shelter's website, but this listing is not always updated right away. The shelter makes sure the dog is adoptable before it goes up on the listing.

Secondly, even if you have your heart set on a pure bred, it'll still be worth you going to the shelter anyway – you might a mixed breed that steals your heart, even if his bloodline isn't 100% pure.

Finally, pure bred dogs often come with a variety of health issues. Many of these health issues are common among that dog's lineage and characteristics. For example, Cocker Spaniels are known to have recurring ear infections.

It's just something that's common with the purebreds. Dachshunds are known to have spinal problems. Boxers are known for arthritis and seizures. Mixed breed dogs often avoid the health problems that are common with pure bred dogs.

They come with traits that are a mixture of good from both of the breeds they're mixed with. They can be just as lovable and just as teachable as a pure bred dog is. When you adopt one of these dogs from a shelter, the adoption fee is often less than what you'd pay for a dog of certifiable lineage.

Shelter Dogs Are More Loyal

There's a difference found in the loyalty level of a dog that you rescue from an animal shelter. These pets tend to have a greater amount of loyalty for their humans. Many of the dogs have not been abused, yet they feel the sting of having been given up.

So when they get adopted and once they go through the period of bonding with their human, they offer the kind of loyalty that can't be shaken. These shelter dogs have a tendency to look out for their human and to keep watch to make sure they're safe.

Part of that is because when you adopt a shelter dog, your love, concern and providing of a good home melts away the shyness and guarded heart he may have. When he discovers that you are his forever human, he's going to love you fiercely.

Your shelter dog will be the first one checking out the windows or doors of your home to make sure you're safe. He'll sound the alarm at anything that doesn't look right in an effort to look out for you.

Even senior dogs are more loyal. While it's true that many people look to adopt puppies from animal shelters, don't discount an adult or a senior dog. They still have a lot of love to give.

Plus, adult dogs are more settled and won't subject your house to the puppy treatment. So if you're looking for the kind of pet that won't chew up your shoes or gnaw on the furniture, then an adult shelter dog would make a perfect addition to your family.

Senior shelter dogs can be great around children and tend to bond easily. They've usually been in a home in the past and have had interaction with families. Many of them have already been taught to use the bathroom outside. They're more mature than a puppy and are quicker to listen to a command.

Shelter Dogs are Friendly

While some shelter dogs appear timid when you first meet them at the shelter, it's just their initial uncertainty and fear. Other shelter dogs may be dancing around their enclosures at the sight of you when you come for a visit.

As a rule, most shelter dogs are friendly and looking for someone to love them. They have big hearts and will quickly fulfil the role of man's best friend if given a chance.

Shelter dogs make the best pets because of their friendly nature.

They're always upbeat and happy to explore the world. They wake up in the mornings bounding with energy, looking forward to their day and to spending time with you. They show gratitude for everything you do for them - from feeding them to walking and playing with them.

They're happy and that happiness tends to rub off on you. When you adopt a shelter dog, you'll find that your own happiness level has increased, and you smile more often.

A shelter dog will show you that he wants to be loved.

When you sit down, he'll approach for a cuddle or even leap right into your lap - even if he's not a lap dog. No matter how big they get or how old, a shelter dog wants to be close to you.

The minute you arrive home after having been gone, your shelter dog will show you how delighted he is to see you. His tail will thump and he may emit a high pitched excited yelp that comes from the depths of his heart.

It's his way of sharing his joy that his human has returned to him. Your dog's friendliness makes your social circle expand. Most dogs aren't afraid to meet people when you're out and about.

If you're on a walk around your neighborhood, your dog won't mind approaching the neighbor for a greeting. At the park, when you're walking your dog, his friendliness will open up interactions between you and other dog lovers.

Shelter Dogs Give Back in Return

They lower your emotional load. You might think that by adopting a shelter dog, you're doing something wonderful. And you are. You're giving a deserving animal a home and love.

But you're getting back just as much - if not more - than you're giving. Shelter dogs give back in many ways. One of these ways is that they can help lower your stress levels. Studies have shown that adopted dogs love interacting with their new human companion.

As a result of this, spending time with the dog lowers your stress hormone. You feel less stress effects on your body as well as less emotionally and mentally. Studies have shown that shelter dogs help people to destress after a stressful day or event.

The dog offers unconditional love and companionship. Spending time with one soothes your emotions and reactions to stress. These benefits extend to feelings of anxiety and depression as well.

Shelter dogs are intuitive and know just when their human needs a head in the lap to pet or a snuggle on the couch. Shelter dogs are great listeners. You can talk to them about your day or about your problems and in return they'll wag their tail or comfort you.

Playing with your shelter dog causes the feel good chemicals to be released in your brain. This causes you to feel less stressed. You'll feel calmer and more relaxed. A shelter dog teaches you not to take yourself so seriously - to get up, have fun, laugh, and love, all of which can help ease the emotional load you may be carrying.

When you invest in a shelter dog, every day that you spend with him, you're getting back far more than you give. A shelter dog helps you with your physical health. You'll get more exercise because a shelter dog helps you to get up and get on your feet more often.

He'll need to go outside, and he'll want someone to play with him. You'll be tossing a ball, fetching a play toy, paying a gentle game of tug of war. You'll enjoy taking your dog out for walks around your neighborhood and to places like the park or for a walk on the beach.

While these outings help solidify the bond between you and your dog, they're helping you as well. You're getting some exercise in and at the same time, you're getting the benefit of everything that goes along with the exercise - the destressing and the time to just stop and take a break - even if it's just for a five minute game of catch with your new pet.

When you spend time with your new animal friend, it helps to alleviate loneliness. They make great companions. Their exuberant way of going through the day is sure to make you laugh. You'll find that you look forward to their funny behavior.

Shelter Dogs Can Give You These Five Health Benefits

First, when you adopt a shelter dog, your health improves. You may notice that the numbers on your blood pressure readings are lower than they were before you adopted the pet.

Not only that, but other heart healthy benefits happen. You'll notice that your bad cholesterol levels are lower. Some studies attribute this to a more active lifestyle after getting the dog.

Second, your entire immune system gets a boost. Shelter dogs have been linked to better performing immune systems in their humans. So they're less likely to have as many sick days as they did before they brought their new family member home.

Researchers aren't sure why this is a benefit but one reason may be because of the lowered stress levels that come from adopting a shelter dog. Third, shelter dogs make great pets because of how they can help children.

Kids are less as likely to be affected by anxiety when they have a dog to give them comfort. This includes helping special needs kids such as those affected by autism. Having a dog around produces a calming effect for kids.

Plus, they can help raise a child's self-esteem and confidence. Fourth, adopting a shelter dog helps a person, regardless of age, to deal with loss, pain or trauma because they give emotional support.

Studies have shown that owning a dog can also help adults and children deal with the aftereffects of having lost a prior beloved pet. Finally, for people who are struggling with mental conditions, having a shelter dog as a companion can help the person remain stable. Some reasons for this is because having the dog around gives a person a purpose, helps reduce symptoms and offers support whenever needed.

Sure, you could find a breeder and take a risk shelling out thousands of dollars for a specific breed of dog. But the shelters are overflowing with dogs that just want a forever home and a human they can give all their love to.

Ready to Adopt a Dog?

Perhaps you don't need anymore convincing...you know it's a wonderful thing to adopt a dog. You save his life...and in return, he saves yours back manifold.

If you're ready to adopt a dog, be sure to look at the checklists and worksheets included in this Dog Adoption Kit, so you make the best choice for you or your family.

Then check your local shelters and dog rescue organization and begging your search for your next furry member of your family.