

## PET SELECTION CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESOURCE LIST

The goal of a selection consultation is to help you choose a pet that is suited to your family, as well as to provide advice that you will need to prepare for the arrival of your pet. If you are interested in a purebred, we ask that you first narrow your selection to a few breeds that appeal to you, since there are now over 400 choices of dog breeds alone (recognized or unrecognized depending on which national or international registry you favor). Once you decide on your preferences, we can then discuss the pros and cons of each breed for your home.

To get some idea as to the size, shape, color, coat type, and other physical characteristics of each breed, you might want to begin by visiting a dog or cat show and interviewing some of the breeders. There are also several web sites, including those operated by most of the major pet food companies, that will help guide you through the selection process. In addition to the Internet there are numerous books available that discuss not only the physical characteristics of the breed, but also a history of how, when, and why the breed was originally developed. This can give you some excellent insight into some of the highly inbred characteristics of that breed. To be completely prepared to deal with a specific breed, it is also worthwhile to be aware of the potential genetic nature of medical conditions seen in that breed.

Even if you are not interested in a purebred pet, the selection consultation can help you decide what age of pet might be best to obtain, the differences between males and females of the breed, as well as where to obtain the pet and what to look for when you get there. It might interest you to note that puppy assessment tests are not a very good way of predicting adult behavior. In fact, you might learn a lot more by assessing the behavior of the parents when you go to visit the kennel. On the other hand, as puppies age, testing may become increasingly more accurate as the puppies emerge into adulthood.

Date of Consult \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/town: \_\_\_\_\_ Province/state: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal/zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Business \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Indicate all family members in the household including age and sex:

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Indicate any other pets in your household and their age and sex:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Desired pet:  Dog  Cat

Breeds of interest: List up to 5

\_\_\_\_\_

4. If you have no specific breeds in mind, list size and coat type that interest you:

\_\_\_\_\_

5. For what reason(s) are you interested in obtaining a pet (choose one or more):

- |                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Companionship       | Increased family security |
| Guarding/Protection | Show/Breeding             |
| Sport/Hobby         | For the kids              |
| Other (discuss):    |                           |

6. Have you ever owned a pet previously? Y/N If yes, describe the pet(s) and when owned:

7. Special needs:

Does any family member have allergies to pets? Y/N If so, what pets and severity:

Are there any special considerations about your home that might need to be considered (e.g., physical disabilities, illness, infirmities, boarders, etc.):

Are there any restrictions on pet ownership in your home or building? Describe:

8. Household (Check one or more that apply)

Describe the type of home you live in:

- Single family detached – Indicate approximate size:
- Town home or semidetached – Indicate approximate size:
- High rise/apartment – Indicate approximate size:
- Basement flat/room – Indicate approximate size:
- Owned  Rental
- Fenced private yard – Indicate approximate size:
- Unfenced yard – Indicate approximate size:
- No yard  Shared yard
- Nearby park(s)  Nearby dog park
- Busy street  Quiet street  Rural
- Other

9. Daily schedule/home environment

Indicate your basic family schedule including how long the pet will be left alone at any one time during the average work or school day?

What is the longest time your pet will need to be left alone?

Where do you intend to house your pet when you are out of the home?

Where do you plan for your pet to sleep at nights?

Will you be using a pen or crate confinement/training? Y/N If yes, describe:

10. Financial (choose one)

- I am concerned about the cost of pet ownership as I will need to watch my expenses
- I have mild concerns about expenses but owning a pet is not likely to significantly affect my budget
- I have no concerns about the cost of owning a pet and this will not have an impact on my budget

Below are a list of financial obligations that responsible pet ownership might entail:

- a) Regular expenses – food, treats, toys, license, cleaning supplies, grooming supplies or regular grooming  
Health care – vaccines, fecal, parasite protection, dentistry, insurance, geriatric care, laboratory tests
- b) One time or infrequent – purchasing the pet, bowls, leash, collar, identification (e.g., microchip), cage  
Health care – spay/castrate, training classes, aging
- c) Occasional recurrent expenses – boarding, medical care for sickness, illness, emergency

### **Pet Selection References**

#### *Breed catalogs:*

There are numerous handbooks, field guides, and kennel club publications in this category. For example:

- Alderton D. Cats. Dorling Kindersley, 1995
- Alderton D. DK Handbook Dogs. Dorling Kindersley, 2001
- American Kennel Club Complete Dog Book, 19th ed. Howell House, New York, 1997
- Fogle B. The New Encyclopedia of the Dog. Dorling Kindersley, 2000
- Fogle B. Dogs. Firefly Books/Dorling Kindersley, 2000
- Fogle B. Cats. Firefly Books/Dorling Kindersley, 2000

#### *Breed guides:*

In many countries, there are publications that list breeds and breeders; check with breed associations.

#### *Internet sites:*

Breeds and pet selection, e.g., waltham.com, purina.com, ckc.ca, akc.org, cfainc.org

#### *Additional books:*

1. Ackerman L. The Genetic Connection. AAHA Press, Lakewood, CO, 1999
2. Baer N, Duno S. Choosing a Dog. Your Guide to Picking the Perfect Breed. Berkley, New York, 1995
3. Benjamin CL. The Chosen Puppy: How to Select and Raise a Puppy from an Animal Shelter. Howell Book House, 1990
4. Clark RD. Medical, Genetic, and Behavioral Aspects of Purebred Cats. Forum Publications, St. Simons, GA, 1992
5. Coren S. Why We Love the Dogs We Do: How to Find the Dog that Matches Your Personality. Firefly Books, 2000
6. Hart BL, Hart LA. The Perfect Puppy. WH Freeman, New York, 1988
7. Kilcommons B, Wilson S. Paws to Consider. Choosing the Right Dog for You and Your Family. Warner Books, New York, 1999
8. Lowell M. Your Purebred Puppy – A Buyer's Guide. Henry Holt, New York, 1990
9. Lowell M. Your Purebred Kitten – A Buyer's Guide. Henry Holt, New York, 1995
10. Tortora D. The Right Dog for You. Simon & Schuster, New York, 1983