

# Dal-Savers Dalmatian Rescue, Inc.

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## WILL A DALMATIAN FIT YOUR LIFESTYLE??

Consider the following questions to help you decide if a Dalmatian is right for your family. As you answer these questions, keep in mind the following pertinent information about the Dalmatian:

- They have endless energy; sometimes they even have rowdy behavior, especially during the growing years.
- They are independent thinkers; they are very smart dogs who become easily bored.
- Their weight can be anywhere from 50 lbs to 70 lbs.
- They are challenging dogs that require lots of attention from their owners.
- Dalmatians shed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

### "Firehouse Dogs"

The Dalmatian was bred to run for miles and still has this tireless enthusiasm. Dalmatians have always had a strong affinity with horses. When fire departments began, their fire wagons were horse-drawn. Dalmatians cleared the path for the horses to travel. At the fire, where there is always a lot of commotion and confusion, the Dalmatians would be there to help calm the horses and to be their mascots. They are playful, eager companions that must get daily exercise if expected to behave at home.

### Are Dalmatians "hyper"?

Dalmatians are usually not "hyper", rather, "high energy". They have been bred to trot all day with the horse and carriage. Dalmatians should have daily physical exercise to help maintain their health and happiness. Dalmatian enjoys walking, jogging or being able to run free in a fenced area. Because of the high activity and intelligence level, Dals can become bored, lonely and very quickly, destructive, if not given an outlet for their energy.

### Aren't Dalmatians bad with children?

Dalmatians are a wonderful breed for a family with children. They are medium-sized, sturdy enough to tolerate children's horseplay, yet not so big as to be overpowering. As with any dog, small children need to be educated about their pet's likes and dislikes, and the dog should be trained to have proper behavior, especially around small children. It is important that your Dalmatian be socialized with people of all ages and other dogs, at all stages of their life.

### Do All the Family Members Want a Dog?

It seems like this should be an obvious thing but sometimes it isn't. A very common reason for wanting a Dalmatian is "My kids/husband just loves the movie and the whole house is decorated in 101 Dalmatians' stuff." In reality, however, when confronted with a normal, active Dal, the kids are very often overwhelmed and not comfortable at all. The reality is that a lively, breathing Dalmatian, unlike the pups in the movie, DOES grow up; DOES NOT talk and IS a lot of work.

### Train your Dalmatian

Dalmatians are intelligent and strongly desire to please their owners. With positive reinforcement techniques and consistently setting limits for appropriate behavior, the Dalmatian quickly learns to be an excellent canine citizen. Training classes are highly recommended for any dog.

## Health problems in Dalmatians

A well-bred Dalmatian is a generally healthy dog requiring little special care. Dalmatians do have a unique uric acid metabolism, with high levels of uric acid excretion in their urine, which can make kidney and bladder stone formation a possibility. By paying attention to the dog's diet and providing plenty of water, serious problems can usually be prevented. Some foods like beef, organ meats and bi-products should be avoided. In the rare severe cases of stones, established medical treatments are available.

A small percentage of Dalmatians born are born deaf. Deaf Dalmatians make perfectly good pets, but need to learn other ways to hear you. Sign language is the most common way to communicate with the deaf Dal. Deaf Dalmatians are usually more attentive to their owner, watching for signals to know what to do next.

## You Really Want A Dalmatian! Why Should You Consider Any Of This?

- You are about to make a huge investment of money, time and love.
- The average, reputable breeder and Dalmatian rescue groups, work hard to provide Dals with good temperament and health and want them to go to a home where they will stay for the rest of their lives.

The Dalmatian is not the right dog for everyone and it is hoped that the questions raised here will help those considering the breed reach the right decision. In today's world, where very few of us have horses, carriages or stables to guard, it is necessary to consider very carefully just where we expect a Dalmatian, or any dog, to fit into our lives. Without this forethought, we are not being fair to ourselves, our family or the dog.

## Here's the good news!!

You have done all the research, found tons of information about Dalmatians and you know you want to share your home with a "spotted friend." But sometimes a puppy just won't fit your needs. **So what do you do?**

## Adult dog to the Rescue!!!

It isn't as hard as you might think to adopt an adult dog and an adult dog does not present half the problems of a puppy. Most adults are through the more difficult puppy stages and make wonderful companions. These dogs can range in age from older puppies (around 1 year of age) all the way up to the 10 year old dog who need a home because her owner was terminally ill and had no family to care for her.

The circumstances under which an older dog may be looking for a home are as many and varied as the number of dogs who need homes. Many clubs and individual breeders offer rescue services for displaced dogs and those dogs will very often make great additions to the right family. The trick when considering an adult is to work through a breeder, club, or rescue group to be sure the dog you adopt will fit your particular lifestyle. You will be asked many different kinds of questions about your home and lifestyle. These questions are not designed to annoy you but to assure that you and your adopted dog are compatible. It may help you to know that the same kind of questions and information are gathered about the dog that needs a new home. Bonding is almost never a problem as most dogs will respond to the loving care offered by their new family. There are many instances of families who have adopted older dogs and found that they have a loyal, loving pet that has fit in well with their family. Our rescue will be glad help you find the right dog for you.

## Should I buy a dog from a pet shop?

No reputable breeder will sell puppies through a pet shop. Pet shops tend to get their dogs from puppy mills, which are large commercial breeding establishments which cannot possibly give the personal care to properly raise and socialize a litter and provide long-term guidance to every owner.