

Are you aligned in your approach? If not, can you reach agreement, or how will you manage the differences?

○ *What do you want from a dog?*

Are you looking for an exercise mate, a lapdog, someone to help guard your property and family, or just a lovely companion for your day-to-day life? Understanding your motivations will help you work through what breed of dog might be best for you.

15.2 WHAT ATTRIBUTES DO YOU WANT IN A PUP/DOG?

Once you know the attributes you want in your pup/dog, you can then choose the breed or cross-breed that best fits these. I give a few examples of dogs that meet those attributes; however, do your own research and reflect on what kind of dog will suit your life. The relationship you have with your dog does have a big impact on your life and your other relationships, so it is worth taking the time.

Here are some attributes to consider:

- physical (size, exercise or activity level, care needs, environmental considerations)
- trainability
- sociability (people, dogs, other species)
- temperament
- health issues.

Physical attributes

Size of your pup when he is a dog

This is generally a matter of personal preference, but is also relevant to your lifestyle. What suits you: a giant breed or a small toy breed? Remember the range is from 1 kilogram to 100 kilograms or more, so consider the space you have, the size of your car, the cost of feeding a larger dog versus a smaller one, and certain breeds' predispositions to health issues, such as problems with joints, which occurs in a lot of the giant breeds. Also think about your ability to train a big, strong dog. Mastiffs, German Shepherds and other strong breeds can require a lot of strength and confidence to manage, so consider whether this is for you.

