



PANDEMIC Pooches



Reported Benefits:

Companionship & Comfort:

Especially during times of social distancing & loneliness.

Human-Animal Bond:

With more people working from home & fewer reasons to leave the house, there is more time to devote to caring for an animal & more time to spend bonding.

Improved Mental Health:

In some cases, the presence of a pet has been associated with stress relief.

Health-Protective Habits:

Dogs can influence our behaviors by promoting healthy eating habits and/or increased physical activity.

Training Availability:

Adopters are able to devote more energy to caring for & training pets.

Gives pets the sufficient attention they need.

Increased flexibility due to spending extra time at home.

Especially helpful for pets that:

- *Need to be crate trained.
- *Need to be potty trained.
- *Have behavior concerns that need to be addressed (i.e., fearful or anxious dogs)

Tips:

Dog Training:

Do not delay training! Seek online classes if in-person training is unavailable at this time. Or, use YouTube as a resource for basic dog commands.

Stick to a Schedule:

This will help your pet when it's time to transition to a post-pandemic lifestyle. Plan time apart from your dog incrementally, slowly building-up their independence.

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Important Considerations:

Socialization:

Is especially important for puppies & fearful dogs. Social-distancing can make this especially challenging. Pets need exposure to a wide variety of people & situations.

Outside Training:

Dog training classes can be difficult to attain during times of lock-down.

Supplies:

There can be limited access to necessary supplies, especially cleaning supplies.

Financial Hardships:

Unfortunately, the pandemic has led to some pet owners having to surrender their pets to shelters or rescues due to a lack of income.

This may become more frequent, especially with renters that are at risk of eviction during the pandemic.

Senior pets are at a higher risk of surrender due to requiring more care:

Consider adopting a senior pet!

Post-Pandemic Lifestyle Challenges:

Remember:

Pets are not just temporary companions, but long-term friends! You have to be prepared to have the dog its entire life.

Work Schedule:

Post-pandemic, you may return to a more rigid work schedule. Will you still have the time & flexibility needed to care for a dog?

Exercise:

Dogs require playtime and exercise every day.

Training:

Dog training requires consistency.

Boredom in Dogs:

Can lead to destructive behavior (ex: chewing).

Separation Anxiety:

Your pet may develop a fear of being left alone.

Questions To Ask Yourself:



The pandemic won't last forever, and adopting a dog is a long-term commitment!

Time: How much can you provide to caring for a dog both now & post-pandemic?

Budget: Can you afford the expense of a pet? Consider your personal job security for long-term pet coverage.

Expenses include: food, bed, crate, collar, leash, toys, medicine, shots, veterinary care, training classes, dog walkers, registration, etc.

Health Care: Can you provide constant care for possible ongoing health problems (skin infections, cancer, etc.), preventative care (vaccinations), and emergency care?

Space: Are pets allowed in your current housing situation? Is there adequate space for a pet?

Lifestyle:

Are you ready to commit to training a dog? Do your research by considering the desired activity-level of the pet that will fit your lifestyle both now & post-pandemic (less-active vs. high-energy dog). Remember, different breeds have different needs (i.e., grooming).

Final Thoughts:



Fostering: Provides a temporary home for pets until they're ready for adoption. It provides you with a shorter period of commitment & the overall cost is less expensive.

This option can provide comfort to both the pet you're fostering & yourself, while allowing you to gain important hands-on experience of caring for a pet.

Consider the best interest of both yourself & the pet when making a decision.



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Our perfect companions never have fewer than four feet.

- Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette

Previous Considerations:

If you were already planning to adopt a dog before the coronavirus pandemic, now might be a good time to take that next step!