

10 Top Reasons to Adopt an Older Dog

Throughout the years, my husband and I have rescued and adopted many older and senior dogs ranging in age from 4 to nearly 11 years old. Each has come with a different life experience. Some have been family pets; others were used as a means of guarding or protecting his family or family's property; some have been dearly loved friends and companions; others have received little love, attention or affection. Many have been neglected, abandoned or abused through no fault of their own. These older dogs have lost their homes for various reasons: divorce or separation of his parents; the death or severe illness of his guardian, change in work schedule, the necessity of moving to a place where a dog is not permitted (i.e. nursing home or assisted living facility, and so on). There are many reasons dogs are surrendered to a shelter – it is a fallacy that these animals are in some way inferior or have health or behavioral problems. Each of the older dogs we have adopted has brought us great joy and deeply enriched our lives. There are many important reasons to adopt an older or senior dog:

- 1). You can save the life of a deserving animal in need of a loving home, and feel good about yourself. Older dogs are usually not considered as “adorable” or adoptable as puppies or young dogs. Puppies generally have a much better chance of being adopted than older dogs. Therefore, older dogs are much more likely to be euthanized than younger dogs. The joy and fulfillment of rescuing an older dog and providing it with quality of life are unparalleled.
- 2). You can experience the appreciation, gratitude, devotion and patience of an older dog which are deeply rewarding. She somehow “knows” and understands that she has been saved, and becomes a grateful, loyal and loving friend, companion and family member.
- 3). Older dogs tend to be calmer, are often obedience trained and socialized and require less supervision or monitoring than younger dogs. They may even form a deeper bond with you than a young dog.
- 4). When you adopt a senior dog, you know what you're getting. When you adopt a puppy, you can never be sure of how large he will get or what he will actually end up looking like. When you adopt an older dog, his size and weight, personality, behavior, likes and dislikes are immediately apparent. – all of which make it easier to select the right dog for you and your lifestyle.
- 5). An adult dog is past the puppy-chewing phase. This phase can last from eight weeks to two years of age or even longer, This is when the dog is “exploring” virtually everything around him and can be a time of destruction of furniture, carpets, art work and other valuable possessions.
- 6). Adult dogs are better able to concentrate or focus and actually may be much easier to train than a puppy. The bonding that takes place during the training of an older dog is

powerful and even deeper perhaps than that developed with a puppy. Adult dogs possess a maturity and range of experience that young dogs simply do not have.

7). Most adult dogs are already socialized. Puppies must be taught basically everything about life, while older dogs have generally already shared and learned from their relationships with other pets, people and children.

8). The first year of expenditures on an adult dog is typically much less than on a puppy that requires all sorts of vaccinations and examinations as well as obedience training. A healthy adult dog does not usually require the frequent visits to the vet that a puppy does.

9). Adult dogs are typically less active than a puppy. Of course, they require walks and playtime but don't require high maintenance activity, a lot of exercise, walking and running and playtime. An older dog is much more content to share quality time with you and simply enjoying your attention and companionship.

10). Adult dogs are just as handsome and beautiful as puppies in their own way. They can make you feel young again and bring joy, fun and pleasure to your life!

An older or senior dog can make a wonderful addition to your life and family. By adopting an older dog, you can learn much about life and the aging process - in so many ways comparable to our own. You can teach your children respect and compassion for our older friends and family members.