

Owner Considerations for a Boxer Dog Breed

There are many things to take into consideration when adopting a Boxer dog breed.

Any admirer of the Boxer can tell you that he is a proud and confident dog. This “pure-bred” certainty goes without saying—it’s evident in the Boxer’s carriage, his expression and his distinctive personality. But a Boxer is also a sensitive creature that depends on human interaction. This is a vital part of what makes a Boxer a Boxer. Boxers thrive on people, revealing in the licking and kissing of their families, and often quite eager to “taste” any willing visitor. If you are looking for a dog that will sit handsomely by the fireside and never bother you, the Boxer is not the dog for you. If, however, you are willing to devote the time and attention to a Boxer that he rightly deserves, this is a breed for you for life!

Although the reader of these pages is more likely interested in finding a companionable family animal than a show champion, there remain many serious factors governing your choice. A primary consideration is time, not only the time of the animal’s allotted lifespan, which is over ten years, but also the time required for the owner to exercise and care for the creature. If you are not committed to the welfare and whole existence of this energetic, purposeful animal; if, in the simplest, most basic example, you are not willing to walk your dog daily, despite the weather, do not choose a Boxer as a companion.

Space is another important consideration. The Boxer in early puppyhood may be well accommodated in a corner of your kitchen but, after only six months when the dog is likely over 40 pounds, larger space certainly will be required. A yard with a fence is also a basic and reasonable expectation. Fortunately, most Boxers do not stray far from their properties (unless attracted by a strong-scented bitch). Unlike other breeds that tend to “escape” on a regular basis, the Boxer will not abandon his post. The fence is a convenient detail because it also keeps strangers from wandering upon your property and challenging your Boxer.

A Boxer is not an outdoor dog. He wants to be as close to you as possible. He is not appropriately “dressed” to spend all his days outside. He needs to be indoors with the family. A Boxer that is kept outdoors exclusively is a miserable dog. Don’t subject your dog to such a life. Boxers do not tend to be independent and they want to follow you, spend time with you, sit with you, etc. Make sure that you want a Boxer in your home and in your life.

Remember too that Boxer puppies can be very inventive, that is to say, destructive. Unless you can supervise a puppy 24 hours per day, you must expect that he’s going to investigate and taste your woodwork, furniture, cabinets, etc. You must be prepared (emotionally and financially) for such mishaps. Needless to say, proper training and a dash of discipline are all it takes to correct such problems. If you are extremely fussy about your house and cannot tolerate muddy paws and slobbery jowls, go for a guppy or parakeet and spare a Boxer the disappointment.

Likewise, the potential owner must consider that a dog impedes upon his freedom! You can no longer escape for a long weekend without preparing for your Boxer’s accommodations. Perhaps you will choose a vacation that is suitable for a dog to come along, but the Boxer must now figure into your planning. Once you have selected a Boxer, and you have bonded with him, you will realize that you have found the ideal companion, one who accepts you for all your faults and appreciates every little thing you do for him! The Boxer’s life expectancy is a sure ten years, perhaps even a few years longer. Since 10 to 12 years is a long expanse of time, you must commit to keeping the Boxer for his whole life. Many Boxers are successfully rehomed (placed in second homes) through rescue groups. Fortunately the Boxer’s adaptability makes this unfortunate, heartbreaking situation more bearable. It’s possible that you might want to consider adopting a Boxer from a rescue group. Since adopting an adult dog is almost always easier than starting from scratch (and bite) with a puppy, this is a sensible, viable option for many. If you would like to give a deserving Boxer a second chance, contact your local breed club or the AKC for the appropriate source.

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