

Searching for the Right Low-Shedding Dog

Standard Poodles and Standard Schnauzers are highly intelligent, active breeds with minimal-shedding coats.

By Allan Reznik

Q. We are a young, active family with two children, ages 12 and 9, and living on two acres in Florida. We enjoy boating on weekends and taking RV trips year-round. We are looking for a loving and loyal dog to add to our family, one that can act as a guard dog and a threat to uninvited guests. I prefer a breed that is highly intelligent, easy to train, middle of the road in grooming, with little to no shedding, and great with kids. Standard Poodles and Standard Schnauzers have caught my eye. Do you think either breed would be right for us?

A. I commend you for putting together a solid shopping list of needs. All dog breeds are loving but not all will fit a particular family's criteria. You've identified what your needs are.

The two breeds you are considering make wonderful family companions as well as alert watch dogs. They will sound the alarm and alert you to anything out of the ordinary although I wouldn't consider them a "guard dog" or a "threat to uninvited guests." Standard Poodles were developed as water retrievers so they would be particularly suitable on your weekend boating excursions.

Poodles and Schnauzers both need regular, professional clipping but the trade off is they are both dog breeds that don't shed.

Both breeds are versatile and highly intelligent. I hope they are high energy and attentive enough to fit the bill as watch dogs for you.