

## Choosing the Right Dog

**Do some research to find the dog that best suits you and your home.**

*By Kathy Salzberg, NCMG*

Q. I am currently looking to become a dog owner. I have had large dogs in the past but now I am looking for a small dog that I can keep indoors. I just got married and I would like a dog who will be an excellent watchdog, and a wonderful, friendly, playful, cuddlesome friend to come home to. I also want to know what kind of dogs don't shed. We have a small home and my husband does not want a dog that goes through many cycles of shedding. Can you help me?

A. Researching the wonderful world of dogs to find the one best suited for you, your husband and your living space is a great idea. I agree with you – there's nothing like coming home to the adoring welcome of your beloved dog! As far as smaller watchdogs go, Terriers are great. They take their job seriously, alerting you to anyone on the premises, even a bird or a squirrel! The Miniature Schnauzer, Wire Fox, Lakeland and Welsh Terriers are good choices because they rarely shed but they do require professional grooming to look sharp and handsome, as a Terrier should.

Non-shedders like the Poodle, the Bichon Frise, Maltese, or even rare breeds like the Chinese Crested (it comes in a mostly hairless as well as a powder puff variety), Havanese, or Bolognese are all lovable characters, but whether or not they fall into the watchdog category would depend upon their individual personalities. Above all, these small dogs were bred to be loving companions. And whether they shed or not, if dogs have medium-to-long hair, they still require lots of brushing to keep their coats from getting matted. Poodles and Bichons need regular professional trimming to look gorgeous as well. Good luck!

Kathy Salzberg, NCMG, is a Certified Master Groomer and writer who has been grooming pets since 1976. With her daughter Missi, she owns The Village Groomer in Walpole, Mass. She has also written extensively on pet care for several consumer magazines and authored three books on dogs and careers with pets. Kathy lives with her pets on Cape Cod.

- Read more Ask the Groomer columns -