

Rescue Dog *Readiness Checklist*

This checklist is designed to guide and support you through the rewarding journey of welcoming a rescue dog into your home, ensuring you're fully prepared for the arrival of your new furry family member.

LIFESTYLE ASSESSMENT

- ☐ **Understanding of the Commitment:** Acknowledge that adopting a dog is a long-term commitment (Potentially 10-15 years).
- ☐ **Lifestyle Compatibility:** Evaluate if your current lifestyle (work hours, travel frequency, social life) can accommodate a dog.
- ☐ **Home Environment:** Ensure your living space is suitable for a dog (size-appropriate, secure, pet-friendly housing).
- ☐ **Family Agreement:** All household members are on board with the decision to adopt a dog.
- ☐ **Landlord Permission:** If renting, confirm that pets are allowed and understand any associated pet policies or fees.

FINANCIAL READINESS

- ☐ **Budgeting for Expenses:** Prepare for ongoing costs (food, grooming, veterinary care, pet insurance).
- ☐ **Emergency Fund:** Set up an emergency fund for unexpected medical expenses.

TIME AND INVOLVEMENT

- ☐ **Daily Care:** Allocate time for daily dog care needs (feeding, walking, playtime).
- ☐ **Training Time:** Dedicate time for training and socializing your new dog.
- ☐ **Pet Care During Absences:** Arrange for pet care during vacations or work-related travel.

KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION

- ☐ **Understanding Dog Behavior:** Familiarize yourself with basic dog behavior and training principles.
- ☐ **Breed Research:** Research different dog breeds (or mixes) to understand their specific needs and temperaments.
- ☐ **Rescue Dog Challenges:** Educate yourself on common issues with rescue dogs (anxiety, past trauma).

PREPARING YOUR HOME

- ☐ **Dog-Proofing:** Secure hazardous items, toxic substances, and fragile objects.
- ☐ **Designating Dog Spaces:** Establish areas for the dog's bed, eating space, and bathroom spot.

EMOTIONAL READINESS

- ☐ **Patience and Adaptability:** Be prepared for an adjustment period and potential behavioral challenges.
- ☐ **Commitment to Care:** Be ready to provide a nurturing and stable environment for a dog with possibly an unknown history.

SUPPORT SYSTEM

- ☐ **Veterinary Care:** Identify a local veterinarian for regular check-ups and emergencies.
- ☐ **Support Network:** Have a network of friends, family, or pet-sitters who can help when needed.
- ☐ **Local Resources:** Know the location of nearby pet supply stores, dog parks, and training centers.

FINAL STEPS

- ☐ **Shelter Research:** Research local shelters or rescue organizations.
- ☐ **Adoption Application:** Complete any necessary paperwork for adoption.
- ☐ **Meet and Greet:** Plan visits to meet potential dogs.

