

House Hunting for Dog Owners

By considering what is best for your dog, you will be able to create a fun and caring environment for you and your dog to enjoy every day of the year. Each dog has their own needs just like you have your own needs. Looking for a home that will fit your needs as well as your dog's needs is important. Be sure you communicate with your Realtor exactly what you and your pup need.

Location. Location. Location.

Are there any Home Owner Association (HOA) restrictions? Each HOA has its own rules related to pets so make sure you review them before making an offer. By reviewing the HOA bylaws, you will find out if the neighborhood allows dogs and the bylaws will detail any other restrictions such as the number of dogs as well as the types, sizes, heights, noise factors and whether pets can freely roam the premises.



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Location. Location. Location. (continued)



Is the location pet-friendly? Are there community receptacles for waste deposits. Will you be comfortable taking your dog out for walks? Is there risk that your dog will step on thorns or broken glass? Is there a green space close by or a hiking trail?

What kind of street is the home located on? If the home is located on a busy street, you may want to pass on it. Even the most well-behaved dogs have been known to run out the front door and dart out into the street.

How about a dog park? Is there one close by? Investigate the dog park to see if you and your dog will be happy there. Will you need to keep your dog on a leash? Does the park provide receptacles for waste deposits? Does it have separate sections for active or large dogs if that makes a difference to your dog?

Is the home located near a great vet and other services you may use such as a doggie day care, a pet sitter or groomer?

What about local wildlife? Are there predators that may hurt your dog? If your pup is smaller, you will need to consider coyotes, bob cats and possibly owls and hawks. You don't have to eliminate an area because there are predators, but you will want to make sure you can keep your pets safe.



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Home Sweet Home.

You will want to consider the size and layout of the home if you have a large dog, or several dogs. Is the space big enough for your dog's breed? Is there enough room for a dog bed, crate, dishes, etc? Many dog owners opt for a larger laundry room for crates or an empty corner for a cozy bed. If you're downsizing, you should take into account how a tighter space will stress your pet.

Does the home have stairs? If you're looking at a 2-story home, consider whether your dogs will be able to navigate the stairs, particularly as they age. When dogs get older, they can get joint problems that make it difficult for them to climb steps. If you do choose a 2-story home, look for a home that has carpeted stairs which will make going up and down much easier and less dangerous.

Is there a fenced in yard? Many buyers prefer a solid block fence around the perimeter. Be sure your dog cannot dig themselves out under the side gate. (One solution for a dog that digs is to bury bricks down in the soil so that they close the gap between the ground and the gate. If the property has a view fence, you may want to cover the lower portion with chicken wire or a hard plastic fencing material so that your pup can't escape.

Are the floors in the home “dog friendly”? Many pet owners prefer tile or laminate because it is easier to clean and doesn't scratch. Some older dogs have difficulty walking without sliding. If the home has hardwood, keep in mind that hardwood scratches and dents more easily, and “accidents” that are not



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Home Sweet Home. (continued)

cleaned up immediately can stain and warp wood floors. You can preserve your existing hardwoods by trimming your furry friend's nails regularly and protect high traffic areas with non-skid rugs. If carpeting is your choice, look for a pet-friendly, stain-resistant low-pile variety or even carpet squares that can be easily replaced. The bottom-line is you need to know your dog and choose the flooring based on your furry friend.

Where will you bathe and groom your dog? Does the home have bathtub or utility sink sized right for your pup? Some owners opt for an outdoor wash area.

Will your dog need to go in and out of the home while you are not home or possibly at night? Finding a home with a doggie door already installed would be great although you can also install one yourself. Keep in mind your dog's safety.

Pet Hazards.

Depending on where you're looking, your potential home may have a pond, pool or other water feature on the property. Is it something that can be made safe for your pet (steps or ramp to get out) or fenced off so they can't fall in?



What kind of plants are in the area your dog will play? Some common outdoor plants can be poisonous for your dog; plants such as Honeysuckle, Bird of Paradise and Lantana to name just a few pose real dangers for your dog. The side effects from these toxic plants



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Pet Hazards. (continued)

can range from nausea to possible death. For a complete list, refer to the ASPCA's website (www.asPCA.org).

The following list contains common plants in the Phoenix area:

Arum Lily	Autumn Crocus	Australian Flame Tree	Avocado
Azalea Baneberry	Bird Of Paradise	Bishop's Weed	Black Laurel
Black Locust	Bleeding Heart	Bloodroot	Bluebonnet
Blue-Green Algae	Boxwood	Bracken Fern	Buckthorn
Bulb Flowers	Burdock	Cacao	Camel Bush
Caladium	Calla Lily	Cardinal Flower	Chalice
Cherry Tree	Chinaberry Tree	Clematis	Cocklebur
Coffee	Coral Plant	Coriander	Dieffenbachia
Elderberry	Elephant Ear (Taro)	Eucalyptus	Euonymus
False Hellebore	Flame Tree	Felt Plant	Firethorn
Four O'Clock	Foxglove	Glottidium	Golden Chain
Ground Cherry	Heaths	Heliotrope	Hemlock
Henbane	Holly	Honeysuckle	Horse Chestnut
Horsetail	Hydrangea	English Ivy	Jasmine
Jimsonweed	Lantana	Larkspur	Lily Of The Valley
Easter Lily	Lupine	Marijuana	Mandrake
Mexican Poppy	Milkweed	Vetch	Yellow Jasmine
Mistletoe	Mock Orange	Monkshood	Moonseed
Morning Glory	Mountain Laurel	Mushrooms	Nightshades
Oak	Oleander	Periwinkle	Philodendron
Pigweed	Poinciana	Poinsettia	Poison Ivy
Poison Oak	Pokeweed	Potato Shoots	Privet
Pyricantha	Rain Tree	Ranunculus (Buttercup)	Rape
Red Maple	Snowdrop	Spurges	Sweet Pea
Tansy	Tobacco	Wisteria	Yews

We hope you find this information useful. Feel free to contact with any questions related to finding a home for you and your entire family, including the 4-legged family members.



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