

# Senior Dogs Rule!



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## Senior Dogs - Why Not?

Let's face it, puppies and young dogs are the first choices when it comes to fostering and adoption. The senior dog is far too often overlooked and, well, forgotten.

Please consider the following thoughts from our friends at the Hounds Haven Basset Rescue relating to senior dogs.

One of the saddest things is an old dog left in a shelter by an uncaring human family. Common excuses people use are that they don't have enough time for the dogs or that they are moving (although we've never heard of any state in the U.S. where dogs are illegal). In this disposable society we live in, some people actually dump their family dog in a shelter and walk out with a new puppy. Imagine the fear, sadness and confusion that an old shelter dog faces. Even worse, their time in the shelter is spent watching people walk past their cages, barely seeing them, instead rushing to the cute puppies.

Why would anyone consider sharing their home with an older dog, when there are so many younger ones available?

By adopting an older dog, you can make a statement about compassion and the value of all life at all ages, as well as register a protest against the indiscriminate and inhumane breeding of dogs, whether it is for profit or to "teach the children about birth." And, of course, just as a puppy has his whole life ahead of him, so does an older dog have the rest of his life in front of him. You can give that older dog the best years of his life while at the same time bringing a wonderful addition into your family.

**1. What You See Is What You Get**  
Older dogs are open books—from

the start, you'll know important things like their full-grown size, personality and grooming requirements. All this information makes it easier to pick the right dog and forge that instant love connection that will last a lifetime. If you're not so into surprises, an older dog is for you!

### **2. Easy to Train**

Think you can't teach an old dog new tricks? Hogwash! Older dogs are great at focusing on you—and on the task at hand—because they're calmer than youngsters. Plus, all those years of experience reading humans can help them quickly figure out how to do what you're asking.

### **3. Seniors are Super-Loving**

These dogs give you nothing but love—and those of you who adopted dogs already in their golden years have told us how devoted and grateful they are. It's an instant bond that can't be beat!

### **4. They're Not a 24-7 Job**

Grownup dogs don't require the constant monitoring puppies do, leaving you with more freedom to do your own thing. If you have young children, or just value your "me time," this is definitely a bonus.

### **5. They Settle in Quickly**

Older dogs have been around the block and already learned what it takes to get along with others and become part of a pack. They'll be part of the family in no time!

### **6. Fewer Messes**

Your floors, shoes and furniture will thank you for adopting a senior pooch! Older dogs are likely to already be housetrained—and even if they're not, they have the physical



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and mental abilities to pick it up really fast (unlike puppies). With their teething years far behind them, seniors also are much less likely to be destructive chewers.

## **7. You Won't Bite Off More Than You Can Chew**

There are those who yearn for a doggie friend of their own, but hold back because they worry what might happen in their lives in the years to come. And they are wise to do so—a puppy or young dog can be anywhere from an 8-to 20-year responsibility, which is not appropriate for the very elderly or those with certain long-term future plans. Providing a loving home for a dog in her golden years is not a less serious commitment, but it can be a shorter one.

## **8. They Enjoy Easy Livin'**

Couch potato, know thyself! Please consider a canine retiree rather than a high-energy young dog who will run you ragged. Not that older dogs don't require any exercise—they do—but they're not going to need, or want, to run a marathon every day.

## **9. A Good Night's Sleep**

Older dogs let you get a good night's sleep because they're accustomed to human schedules and don't generally need nighttime feedings, comforting, or bathroom breaks.

## **10. Time for Yourself**

Older dogs leave you time for yourself, because they don't make the kinds of demands on your time and attention that puppies and young dogs do.

## **11. Companionship.**

Senior dogs whose lives have been disrupted in their later years have so much love to give and like nothing better than giving it. They tend to rely heavily on their owner for companionship and therefore bond very quickly. The desire to reciprocate the companionship given to them is very strong.

## **12. Seniors for Seniors**

An attractive concept used by many animal rescue/humane organizations, an older dog can be successfully matched up with a senior citizen. Lifestyle requirements of an older person often mix well with the lifestyle of an older dog. It's a win/win situation, resulting in quality retirement companionship for both.

## **13. Who says you can't teach an old dog new tricks?**

You sure can. While it may take an older dog a bit longer to adjust to new situations, they can; they will; they do. Their only requirement is to be given the opportunity. Generally, older dogs are calmer and therefore will focus much easier on what you are trying to teach them.

## **14. Save a Life, Be a Hero**

At shelters, older dogs are often the last to be adopted and the first to be euthanized. Saving an animal's life offers an unparalleled emotional return on your investment, and you'll feel the rewards every day you spend together.

## **15. They're CUTE!**

Need we say more?

