
GREAT DANE OWNERSHIP



THE RIGHT CHOICE?

An educational effort by
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POINTS

TO CONSIDER

Introduction

This pamphlet has been prepared in the hopes that it will help you, the potential Great Dane owner, consider what is involved in Great Dane ownership. Any member of Dane Outreach will be happy to answer any questions you may have about Danes.

Dane Outreach

Dane Outreach is a not-for-profit volunteer group of individuals devoted to the placement of unwanted Great Danes. Dane Outreach has been in continuous operation since 1974.

For more information on Dane Outreach, please contact us.

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- ◆ Adoptions
 - ◆ Educational information
 - ◆ Breed Information
 - ◆ Placements
-

GREAT DANES

THE RIGHT CHOICE?

Before you add a Great Dane to your family, you should consider:

Are you ready for the responsibility owning a pet requires? Will you be a responsible dog owner? A dog is for life; once you've made the commitment to obtain one, you are responsible for the animal during his or her *entire* lifetime.

Before you consider adding a Dane into your household, please take some time to determine if this is the correct breed for you. Do research on the breed to find out all of the good things-and bad-about Dane ownership. Can your budget afford a dog as large as a Dane? Routine upkeep is expensive, as are training classes and unexpected veterinary expenses. Can you make a commitment to the dog? Danes are "people dogs" and need to be a part of the family. Do you have the time to give the dog the attention he will need and to properly train and socialize him?

Also, are all the family members in agreement about getting a Dane? If not, then please don't add one of these gentle giants to your household. It would not be fair to either the dog or the person.

Once you've determine that a Great Dane is the breed for you

Deal only with established, reputable breeders; or with a rescue program that is knowledgeable about Great Danes. You can find out about breeders by contacting the American Kennel Club for a list of clubs in your area. Contact club members and visit as many breeders as possible to help you formulate your decision on who to purchase from. Local animal shelters usually have information on rescue organizations.

Find out what is considered proper puppy raising methods and purchase only from a breeder who is doing it correctly. We recommend that you purchase from a breeder who adheres to the Great Dane Club of America's "Breeder's Code of Ethics".

Ask questions; and again, visit as many kennels as you can. Even if a breeder doesn't have puppies for sale at the time, it will give you some insight on what you should expect.

Don't make a rush decision; never buy a puppy because you feel sorry for it. Consider the purchase carefully before committing yourself.

YOU'VE MADE THE DECISION

*Before you bring your new
Dane home*

Find a training class in your area. If you are getting a new puppy, inquire about puppy kindergarten. Training is a very important aspect of Dane care and should not be neglected. Be sure your instructor has experience with Great Danes. In most cases, a group class is the best for you and your dog.

Purchase the Book "How To Raise A Puppy You Can Live With" and read it! This book will give you insight on the various developmental stages in a puppy's first year. Also get the video tape by Ian Dunbar, "Sirus Puppy Training".

Find out about crates and crate training. A crate is a very useful tool for helping with housebreaking. A properly used crate is worth its weight in gold!

Purchase your dog food. Be sure to find out from the breeder or previous owner what the dog is used to eating. Also purchase your dog toys (very sturdy, please!), stainless steel dog dishes, leash, collar, and other items you will need.

Puppy proof your house; be familiar with housetraining; and have give advance thought to scheduling for feeding and "quality time".

KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT

*When you bring your puppy or
adult home*

Plan on bringing your Dane home when you can spend some time helping the dog adjust to his or her new surroundings.

Be clear on what medical treatment, vaccines, and wormings your Dane may have had. Find out what additional vaccines are needed.

Find a vet who is familiar with Great Danes and make an appointment to have a "well" health check. Discuss whether the veterinarian is familiar with Danes and what type of emergency services he may offer.

Know what the dog is eating, and on what schedule. Successful housebreaking depends on a regular, set feeding schedule with no diet changes that might upset the dog's stomach. Remember that any diet changes should be made gradually. Dane puppies can have special feeding requirements so the diet suggested by your breeder should be followed.

Be sure to give the new arrival plenty of time to adjust to his new home. Do not overwhelm the dog with a hoard of new people, sights, and sounds.

Establish what the house rules are immediately and be consistent about them! Always remember to give praise after a correction.

Give your new arrival plenty of love and affection!

PUPPIES NEED SPECIAL CARE

Remember that a Dane puppy has special requirements

A Dane puppy is a baby and should be treated as such. Never leave the puppy out in the cold for long periods of time. In hot weather always be sure to provide shade.

Dane puppies are smart, but “soft”. All training should be done in a gentle, consistent manner. Danes **do not** respond well to harsh physical punishment. Always be sure to praise after corrections.

A Dane puppy must have a set feeding schedule to help make housebreaking easier. Dane puppies are usually very clean and easy to train.

A Dane puppy is somewhat fragile; rough and tumble play should be avoided as serious injury can occur.

A Dane puppy needs to be properly socialized around other dogs, kids, sights, and sounds. This is a very important aspect of puppy care.

A Dane puppy is just that—a puppy! Do not be dismayed when he chews, digs, barks, has accidents in the house and all of those other things. Learn how to train for the behavior you want.

AN ADULT INSTEAD?

If you don't have time for a puppy, maybe an adult is the right choice for you.

Puppies take a lot of time, so maybe an adult is better for you. An adult can be obtained from a breeder or a rescue group. Beware of free dogs advertised in the paper—they are usually free for a reason!

If you choose an adult, be sure you know enough about his history to feel comfortable that he is the correct dog for you. Does he get along with kids, cats, or any other animal your household may have? Take time to find out about this dog before you bring him into your home.

When you bring your adult home, know what his medical history is. If you don't have any information, be sure to have a complete veterinarian check. Be sure to keep him on the same diet he came with. If you want to switch foods later, you can as long as it is done gradually.

Give the adult about 2 to 4 weeks to fully adjust to your household. Be patient, set the rules, and begin a set of obedience classes. Not only will these help you learn how to train your dog, they will help him bond to you.

Never overwhelm your new adult with a lot of strangers when you first get him. Easy does it—go gradually until you know the dog and his reactions to different situations.

Adult Danes can make wonderful pets and should be considered if your time does not allow a puppy.

GUIDELINES FOR BEING A RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNER

Throughout this whole publication, you have heard us state “responsible owner”. What *is* a responsible dog owner?

The following guidelines for responsible dog ownership were established by the Responsible Dog Owners Association. The GDCWW has borrowed these and added a few other guidelines.

We hope that when you purchase or obtain your dog, you will consider it as a commitment for life; and that you will make every effort to be a responsible owner.

- *Assume ownership only when you can make the commitment to care for the dog for its entire life.
- *Provide sufficient shelter to protect the dog from the elements. Provide fresh water and food on a regular, established basis.
- *Spay or neuter ALL pets; leave breeding to those who are active in working or showing quality stock and are knowledgeable about the breed, and are responsible for the puppies they produce.
- *Maintain the best possible standard of care; routine vaccinations, wormings, and vet care as needed.
- *Tools of a responsible dog owner; poop scoop and proper means of disposal, leash, crate, and a fenced yard or a dog run.
- ***NEVER** allow the dog to run at large or roam free. **NEVER** leave small children unsupervised with ANY dog. ALWAYS have control over your dog. NEVER tie out or chain the dog.
- *Praise, encourage, and reward good behavior. Firmly correct unacceptable, overaggressive behavior BEFORE it becomes a problem.
- *Training is essential. Learn dog behavior and breed characteristics. Provide adequate human companionship. Get professional help to teach you how to teach your dog correctly.

Can *you* be a responsible dog owner? If you cannot or are not willing to follow the guidelines in this pamphlet, then perhaps you should consider some type of pet who is less demanding.

It is a very real fact that countless numbers of dogs are destroyed each year. Through responsible dog ownership, you can be a part of the solution, not the problem.

Any person who is not a responsible dog owner is causing problems for those who are. Any animal is a commitment for life; please think carefully before adding a dog into your home.