

Small Dogs ~ Cute and Cuddly

By Joanne M. Anderson / jmawriter.com

Small dogs bring lots of fun and easy care into a household for their cute looks, clever antics and small size. They are bred for companionship, so they do not have the roaming, herding or hunting characteristics of the larger, working dogs. As rules have relaxed on airlines and in hotels and many retail settings, small dogs and their owners find welcome mats in places previously off limits.

The smaller models can be more easily transported in doggie-approved, soft cloth, travel bags, and there are tons of travel accessories and clothing. Whether you are going across the country or around the block, having a small dog can be a huge advantage. Apartment, condo, small house and city lifestyles are also good reasons for a small dog. They take up small spaces and do not require huge walks in the park or extensive exercise.

Of course, small dogs do not need as much food as medium or large dogs, and they are much easier to handle at bath time. They can alert you when someone comes near the door, and they will slip into your lap or bed without infringing on your space.

As with any dog, do your homework on its personality, grooming needs, getting along with children or other pets and general temperament. Some of the top small breeds are ~

- **Skye Terrier**, dependable, likes outdoor activity, does not like cats.
- **Dachshund**, excellent watchdog, very attached to owner and family, aggressive with unfamiliar children, likes to dig, hunt and chase.
- **Jack Russell Terrier**, very active, jumps all over the place, lively.
- **Boston Terrier**, bonds well with children, short hair, tends to chew on things.
- **Maltese**, doesn't shed much, friendly, gets along with other pets, needs lots of human contact and grooming.
- **Pug**, lovable companion, headstrong, snores and wheezes a lot.
- **Pomeranian**, gentle, likes children if you get one as a puppy, sheds considerably, noisy playing with children.
- **Chihuahua**, unpredictable, will nip when disturbed, not great for small children, tends to bark often and long, fiercely loyal to owner.
- **Shih Tzu**, bred for companionship, gentle, friendly, high grooming needs.

- **Miniature or toy poodle**, extremely sensitive and shy, best suited for single owner, okay with family and other pets with proper time to get used to all, needs professional grooming.

There are many others like the cocker spaniel, beagle, cairn terrier like Benji, Lhasa Apso, miniature pinscher, Welsh Corgi, Scottish terrier, Shetland sheepdog, West Highland white terrier, miniature Schnauzer, and Yorkshire terrier. Many of the small breeds come out of puppy mills, cost too much and can be difficult to housetrain because their early weeks are spent in crowded conditions which included other puppies, food, poop and water in the same space. They are also more likely to have genetic defects and behavior issues.

Check out the humane society and rescue groups near you for a small dog or get references from an approved, certified breeder. Since they live longer than the larger ones, getting a dog even at 7 or 8 years old could be just mid-way through its life time. Bow wow, arf arf, yip yip.

Great doggie movies:

The Wizard of Oz (Toto), 1939
Benji, 1974
Shiloh, 1997
The Adventures of Milo and Otis, 1986
My Dog Skip, 2000
The Ugly Dachshund, 1966

Terrific small dog books:

A Small Dog's Big Life, by Irene Kelly
BOOM!: Big, Big Thunder & One Small Dog, by Mary Lyn Ray
Girl's Best Friend (mystery series), by Leslie Margolis
A Dog's Life, The Autobiography of a Stray, by Ann M. Martin
The Adventures of Jack: The Agent with a Bone to Pick, by D. R. Tara
Simba (The Spy and Others), by Tara Star