

# *Boosting Pet Adoptions by*

## **IDENTIFYING AND USING PERSONALITY TRAITS**





# Agenda

- Personality vs Behavior
- Is Breed Important to Adopters?
- Identifying What Matters for Adoption
- Collecting Interaction Notes
- Matchmaking with Intention for Lifestyle





# Personality vs Behavior



## **Personality:**

- An animal's individual likes and dislikes:
  - Energy level and exercise needs
  - Social enjoyment, tolerance and thresholds
  - Play style and natural outlets
  - Environmental preferences

## ***Behavior:***

- How an individual animal **responds** inwardly or outwardly to:
  - The environment
  - Things happening in the environment



# Is Breed Important to Adopters?

## Ready to adopt a dog?

Let's get started. Search adoptable dogs from shelters, rescues, and individuals.

Location

Mesquite, NV

Search for

Dogs

Add Dog Criteria

Q Search

Feeling adventurous? [Try our new AI SmartSearch](#) (BETA)

## It turns out, yes, it is!

- Of approximately 6.5 million searches, 39% of initial dog searches on AAP include breed, with an additional 7% editing their search to add breed.
- Top 5 breeds searched on AAP include Chihuahua, Labrador Retriever, Golden Retriever, German Shepherd, and Pit Bull Terrier.



# A new way to look at breeds





# Identifying Personality Traits

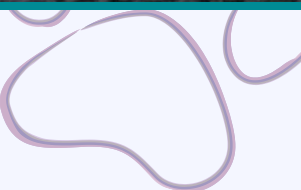
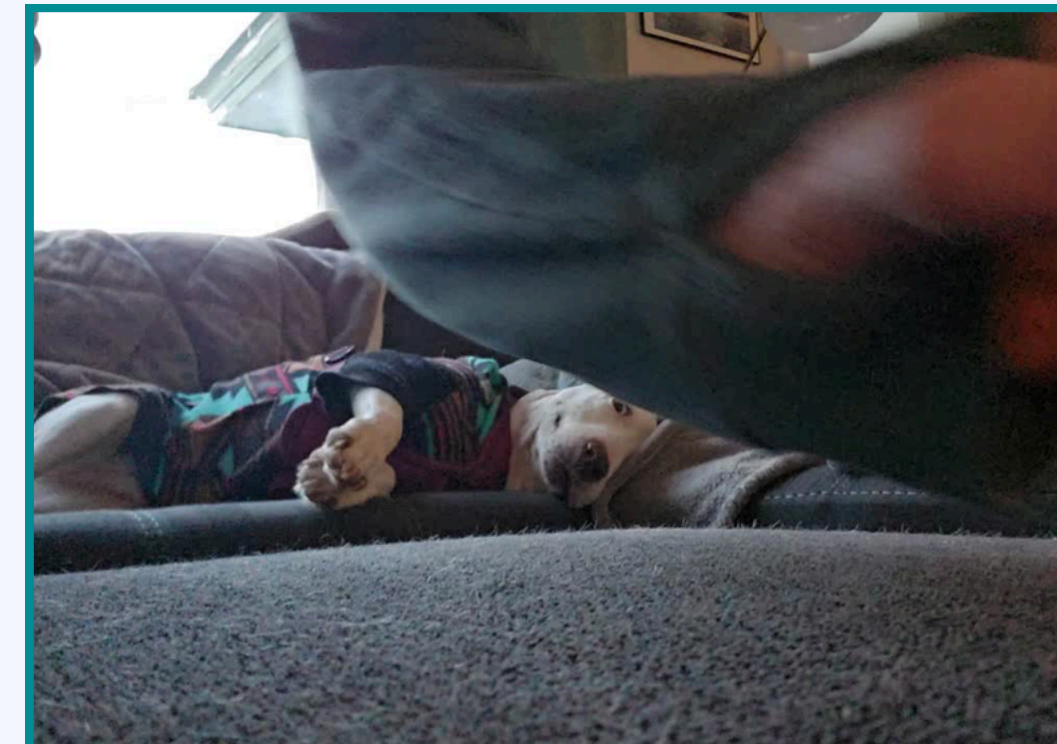
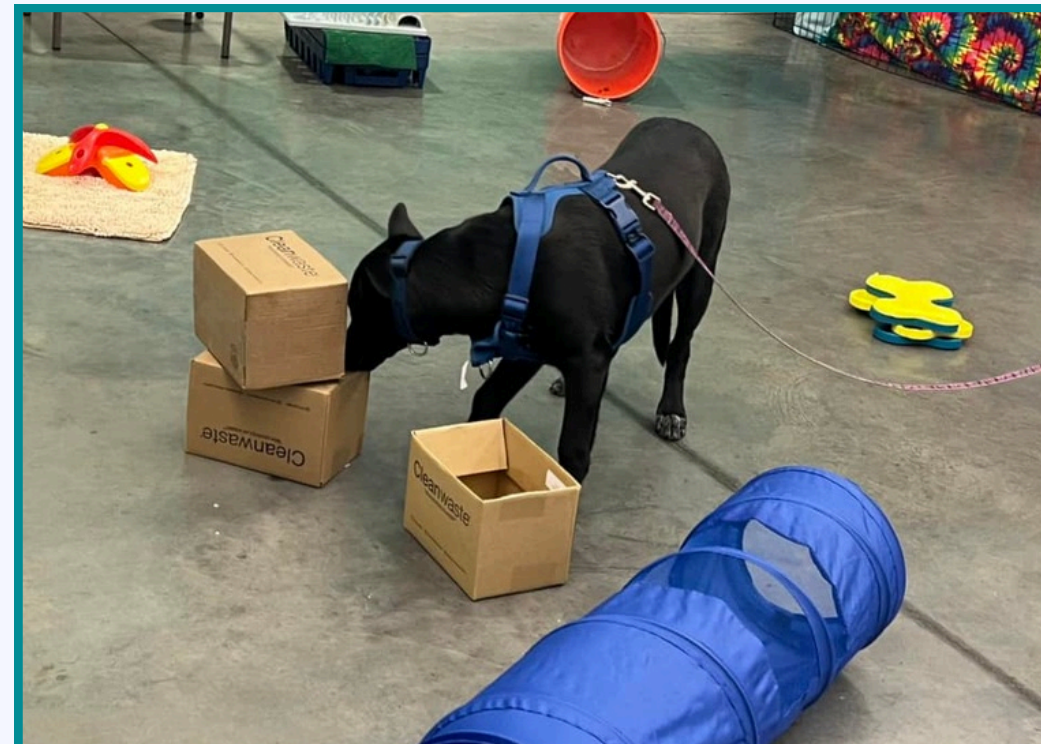
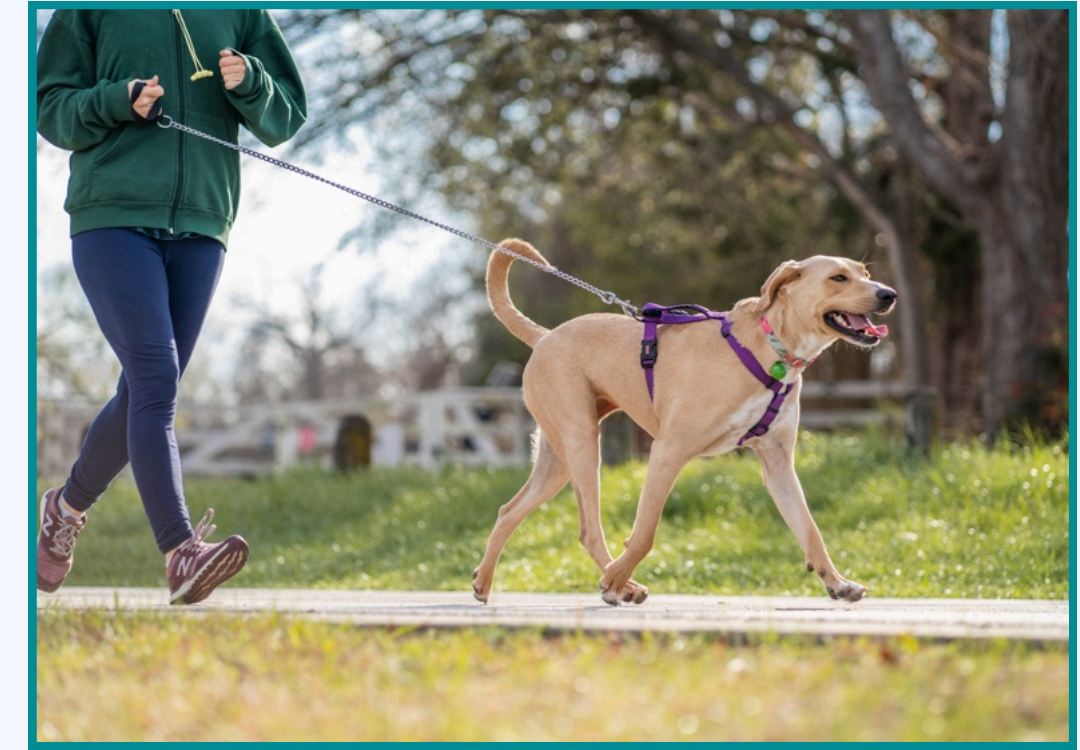
Energy/Exercise

Marathon Runner

High Intensity

Low Energy

Couch Potato





# Identifying Personality Traits

Social Enjoyment and Tolerance

Life of the party

Quality over Quantity

Inquisitive/Curious

Shy/Introverted

Thoughtful/Patient





# Identifying Personality Traits

Play style and Natural Outlets

Chase Games

Seeking/Searching

Waiting/Watching

Fetching/Retrieving

Stalking/Herding

Foraging/Consuming





And then match it with the adopters!



Environment



Lifestyle



Resources



Tolerances



# Data Collection: Traditional Methods

Pen & Paper – never fails!

3 DAY OBSERVATION TRACKING SHEET: CANINE

INTAKE DATE: 8/2/14

INTAKE TYPE (CIRCLE ONE): SURRENDER, STRAY, CUSTODY, OR TRANSFER

ANIMAL NAME: Shamrock

IF APPLICABLE:

€ STRAY HOLD (DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIL \_\_\_\_\_)

€ ABANDONMENT HOLD (DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIL \_\_\_\_\_)

€ BITE QUARANTINE (DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIL \_\_\_\_\_)

DATE: 2/15 DAY 1: STIMULUS/RESPONSE (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

CARETAKER OBSERVATION:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive
HANDLING TOLERANCE:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive
ROTATION + MOVEMENT:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive
ENRICHMENT + RESOURCES:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive

OBJECTIVE BEHAVIOR NOTES: Allowed me to put a collar on. NOT actively seeking contact in most scenarios, but generally curious, moves to back willingly during cleaning, enjoying his kong.

DATE: 2/16 DAY 2: STIMULUS/RESPONSE (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

CARETAKER OBSERVATION:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive
HANDLING TOLERANCE:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive
ROTATION + MOVEMENT:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive
ENRICHMENT + RESOURCES:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive

OBJECTIVE BEHAVIOR NOTES: Not actively seeking contact. Curious.

DATE: 2/17 DAY 3: STIMULUS/RESPONSE (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

CARETAKER OBSERVATION:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive
HANDLING TOLERANCE:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive
ROTATION + MOVEMENT:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive
ENRICHMENT + RESOURCES:	Social	Passive	Avoidant	Reactive

KEY: Social = Affiliative, seeks contact | Passive = Cautious, tolerant | Avoidant = Freezes, hides | Reactive = Growls, bites

Nikita } We only switched out one dog in this group.  
Frankie } Durham and Frankie did okay,  
Lawister } but I could tell they were  
River } starting to get pushy w/ one  
Bexie } another. After sending Frankie home,  
Durham } everyone played very nicely until  
we started bringing dogs back.

White Boards– endless possibilities!

ACTIVITY BOARD WEEK: 12/30

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
LINUS	PG	PG	PG	PG	PG		
SHILOH	PG	PG	PG	PG	PG		
PAULY	PG	PG	PG	PG	PG		
KARMA	PG	PG	PG	PG	PG		
BANKS	PG	PG	PG	PG	PG		
MACARONI	PG	PG	PG	PG	PG		
CHEEZ	PG	PG	PG	PG	PG		
DARLA	PG	PG	PG	PG	PG		

NAME

NAME	Status	Pets	Traning Plan	Other Trn	Activity	Last Visit	Notes
Lucian	Avail	✓	✓	3/22	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	Husky - food grubby
Mylo	Avail	✓	✓	4/2	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	Septon - on BG
King	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	going after each other?
Scarlett	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	(Zach is moving)
Rosies	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	Needs DD
Mr. Pinkie	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	Harrel stress
Purdy Girl	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Louise	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Hank	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Crow	Adopted	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Gold	Adopted	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Shirley	Beh	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Robin	Beh	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Sparrow	Beh	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Lark	Beh	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Heady	Avail	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Ellie	Avail	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Bumble	Avail	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Casper	Avail	✓	✓	4/7	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Cats							
Mozzie	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Polly	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Miley	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Sara	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Hugo	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Priscilla	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	
Niccan	Avail	✓	✓	4/5	4/6 PG	4/7 PG	

HARLEY

WW=Weekend Warrior  
KAC=K9 Commands

NAME	Notes
Jinx	Dogs out of yard Dog selective house broken lives w/cats/sun dogs PG 13
DONALD	HND-FULL Dog selective Doesn't like water
WOOKIEE	6 yrs ADULTS ONLY Jumps fence Resource guards
Jenny	Dog selective lives w/cats house broken escape artist
Chirley	Adult home house broken cats
Dozer	Dog selective no cats resource guards PG 13 separation anxiety PUPPY-CLAMOR
Mellow	Go slow timid Kids lot lives w/large dogs likes ball knows several commands Lives w/WW
Hartem	on hold-7/19 good w/kids 10+ good w/most dogs house broken jumps fences knows commands lost resource guard
OLE BLUE	Leash walk only no unsupervised yard time 200 solo at this time cats out/mixed quickly
Rita	HND-FULL Dog selective Leash reactive when people
Harley	Medical hold Cannot go home Pulls on leash
Steak	Good w/most dogs cats will poop in yards
Peanut	Adult only home Very dog selective/solo Pass PG 13!
Kippew	Dogs/Jones out of yards energetic good w/kids great on leash NO CATS
Knows "sit"	
Clarice	adult home only dog selective cats bite history partial restriction Dietary-Plantain
Henry	Dog Selective Kids lot Slow intro w/cats loves baths
Ray	HWT partial divine internal
Charlotte	INT AVAILABLE





# Data Collection: Digital

## 3rd Party Software

Behavior Concern Form

Animal Name:

Write something

Dog Behavior Concern: (optional)

Select an option

Incident title:

Write something

Cat Behavior Concern (optional)

Select an option

Location of Occurrence:

Write something

Was there a bite?

Select an option

What did you observe before, during, and after the concern occurred?

Write something

Close

Submit

## In-house Software

+

Add Memo

02/18/2025 | 3 Day Observations by uvhs\_brey

3 day eval.  
2/15  
Caretaker Observation: Social  
Handling: Social  
Rotation and movement: Social  
Enrichment and resources: Social  
Objective behavior notes: Very affectionate. Seeking attention and contact even in presence of treats.

2/16:  
Caretaker Observation: Social  
Handling: Social  
Rotation and movement: Social  
Enrichment and resources: Social  
Objective behavior notes: Very affectionate cried for attention.

2/17:  
Caretaker Observation: Social  
Handling: Social  
Rotation and movement: Social  
Enrichment and resources: Social  
Objective behavior notes: Moved to iso for KC in good spirits.

See files for copy.

02/14/2025 | Intake Memo by uvhs\_meghan

Loose and wiggly.

## Spreadsheets

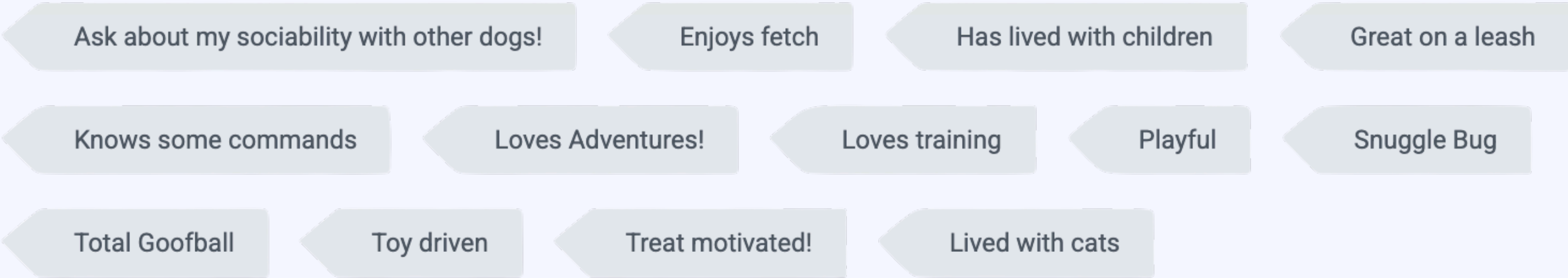
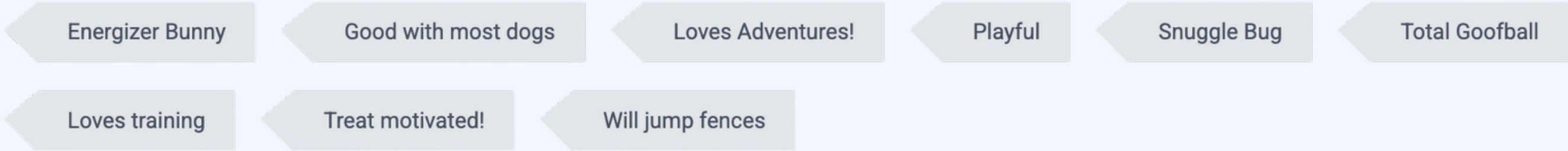
	H
	Notes
	Very forward on greetings, would do best at first dog in the yard appears to lack ideal social skills. Will hump, put head over shoulder when overwhelmed.
	nervous in groups but given space/time will join chase games, v
	needs long long time to get comfortable with calm independent i
	and give play signals
	very pushy to create rough/wrestling play
	needs slower intro to rough play
	loves to play with space inbetween, gets nervous and lays down
	hard player that needs some human help with taking breaks
	instant play!! very loose, wiggly and zooming all over the yard. n
	calmer intro to play needed
	worried at first, took some time to warm up into very loose/wiggly
	calmer play, will give good hard corrections for hyper play on he
	enjoys tag/chase, will try to dictate play/interactions and give ha
	calmer play, needs some space to do intro
	calmer play that builds over time
	loose/wiggly right away
	calmer play that builds over time
	pushy healthy play, listens but wants to play and can be rude ab
	great hard healthy play
	great hard healthy play
	needs more intro work, wants to play
	very healthy puppy play
	great hard healthy play
	great healthy play
	needs some time and slow intro to be comfortable
	on the shy gentke side
	could be in any group. will separate if not wanting to play



# Tell a Story of who the Dog Is....



## ATTRIBUTES





# Kennel Card in Photo Mode










## Rufus - Available from Foster

SEX	Male
WEIGHT	133.8 lbs
AGE	4Y/5M/2W
ADOPTION FEE	\$350.00
INTAKE DATE	1/20/2025

Apply for Adoption



Meet Rufus!

Rufus is a gentle giant with a heart as big as his paws! Rufus came into our care when his guardian's lifestyle changed, and this luscious lovable goofball is ready to find his next chapter. He's a true "lovealuffagus" – goofy, super sweet, and overflowing with affection.

Rufus has fun-loving energy and enjoys romping around outside, but don't be fooled – he knows how to kick back and relax too. Whether he's lounging on the couch, nestled in your lap (he has no idea he is 130+ lbs!), or giving you sweet face kisses, he's always ready to snuggle and share some love. His enthusiasm for people is endless, and he might even try to jump right into your arms for a cuddle – after all, he thinks he's a lap dog! Food is his ultimate love language, so whether it's a treat or a dollop of peanut butter, you'll see Rufus light up with joy. He's also a fan of chewing on things, going on hikes, and splashing around in the water. And let's not forget his love for being brushed – a little pampering goes a long way with this guy!

Rufus is looking for a home where he can be his goofy, snuggly self, sharing all his love and playful energy with his new family. Could you be the lucky one to give this lovable giant a home? He's ready to fill your life with laughter, love, and plenty of adventure!

Dogs: Rufus is dog social. If you have a dog at home, we'll arrange a meet-and-greet before you head home.

Cats: We would not recommend Rufus for a home with cats due to his size.

Children: Rufus has lived with children and enjoyed their company but may knock over littles by accident!





# Combining breed and personality traits to help adoption match making



What's My Type?

Outdoor Adventurer Dog

You'll fall in love with me because I may be:

Enthusiastic

- Always eager
- Willing to get on board with whatever the day brings

Cooperative

- Team Player
- Attentive
- Trainable
- Responsive partner in life

Outgoing

- Extroverted spirit, both with people + other animals

You might find me challenging because I may be:

Active

- Ambition for athleticism, physical needs may be intense at the end of a long day

Immature

- Silly puppy nature, short attention span, neediness, impulsivity, insecurity

Doting

- Endless affections; a little heavy on the PDA if you value your personal space

Credit: L.E.G.S: Learning, Environment, Genetics, Self - Kim Brophey



What's My Type?

Renaissance Dog

You'll fall in love with me because I may be:

Flexible

- Highly adaptive to change
- Easy-going at home + many environments

Practical

- Observant
- Self-sufficient
- Low-maintenance

Good-Natured

- Tolerant
- Cooperative
- Level-headed
- Docile

You might find me challenging because I may be:

Opportunistic

- Always looking for leftovers of any kind

Self-Serving

- The "Dog Agenda" sometimes supersedes your "Human Agenda"

Credit: L.E.G.S: Learning, Environment, Genetics, Self - Kim Brophey

What's My Type?

Wild at Heart Dog

You'll fall in love with me because I may be:

Free-Spirited

- Intuitive
- Instinctual
- Wild nature

Independent

- Undemanding
- Not clingy or needy
- Confident

Logical

- Whip-smart
- More common sense than some people

You might find me challenging because I may be:

Suspicious

- Strong sense of self-preservation, discerning and cautious

Instinctual

- Wilder impulses can range from inconvenient to serious

Self-Preserving

- May be difficult to train or confine

Credit: L.E.G.S: Learning, Environment, Genetics, Self - Kim Brophey



What's My Type?

Regal Runner Dog

You'll fall in love with me because I may be:

Elegant

- Naturally inclined to appreciate the finer things in life, craves warmth & comfort

Reserved

- Generally calm, quiet, unobtrusive, and stoic

You might find me challenging because I may be:

Sensitive

- Not cut out for harsh conditions, great endurance, or rough play

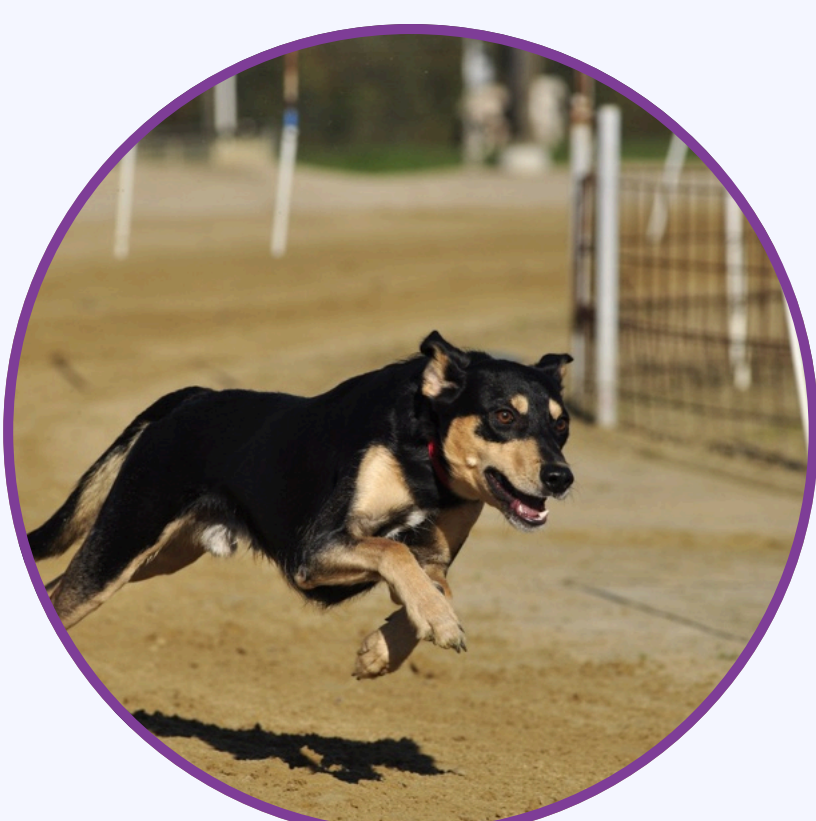
Flight Risk

- Keen eye for prey + instincts to hunt with sudden swiftness

Self-Directed

- Doting on you or following directions is often not the top priority

Credit: L.E.G.S: Learning, Environment, Genetics, Self - Kim Brophey






# Adopt-A-Pet's Personality Platform

[Back to Search](#)

## My name is Mia!

Posted 3 hours ago

New!



♡

Cared for by San Francisco SPCA

Adoption process


- 1 Submit application
- 2 Interview
- 3 Meet with pet

[View all](#)

Adoption fee: \$125

This covers all of the surgery and treatment to prepare Mia for adoption.

[Ask About Me](#)



### My basic info

Breed	Jack Russell Terrier	Weight	25 lbs/11 kg (current)
Color	White	Sex	Female
Age	11 years old, Senior	Pet ID	123456
Size	Small, 25 lbs/11 kg or less (when grown)		

### My details

✓ Spayed

✓ House trained

✓ Good with dogs

✓ Good with kids

✓ Vaccines up to date

✓ Heartworm negative

### My personality

Affectionate

Clever

Communicative

Snuggly

### My story

[f](#) [t](#) [p](#) [e](#)

Here's what I have to say about me.

Sweet Mia is about 10-12 years old and weighs 20 pounds. She was surrendered by her owners due to a financial hardship. Mia is such a loving and quiet girl and a little sad now that she has lost the only home she ever knew. She is house trained, knows basic commands, loves people and is in good health, with many years ahead of her. Mia would make a wonderful companion for a senior.

### Personality traits

✕ Adventurous

+ Affectionate

✕ Athletic

+ Chill

+ Clever

+ Communicative

+ Confident

+ Curious

+ Enthusiastic

+ Extroverted

+ Food-motivated

+ Gentle

+ Goofy

+ Independent

+ Introverted

+ Lazy

+ Patient

✕ Playful

+ Quiet

+ Quirky

+ Resilient

+ Shy

+ Snuggly



# Helpful for Adopt-A-Pet's FV Platform

Adopt a Pet BETA

My shelter/rescue

Pet lists

Tools

Help

JZ

My account

My volunteers & fosters

Woofy's Rescue [Switch location](#)

Volunteer & foster edits

ON

Bulk actions

Apply

All users

Search name

<input type="checkbox"/>	Date <div>(Added)</div>	First name	Last name	Email address	Permissions	Actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	3/02/20	George	Costanza	gcostanza@nothing.com	Always requires approval	<a href="#">Remove from account</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3/02/20	Dexter	Morgan	dmorgan@serial.com	Always requires approval	<a href="#">Remove from account</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3/02/20	Daphne	Moon	dmoon@psychiatry.org	Always requires approval	<a href="#">Remove from account</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	3/02/20	Leslie	Knope	lknope@cityparks.org	Always requires approval	<a href="#">Remove from account</a>

1

Adopt a Pet BETA

JZ

My volunteers & fosters

Woofy's Rescue [Switch location](#)

Volunteer & foster edits

ON

Invite New Volunteer/Foster

Search name

Date

Name

Ryan Seacrest

rseacrest@mtv.com

Pending

[Review pet edit](#)

George Costanza

gcostanza@seinfeld.com

Always requires approval



# To Recap

- Both breed and personality are important to adopters
- Breed is important to understand, but highlight individual personality
- Notes & documentation are critical
- Tell a story
- Counsel with intention





# Presentation Resources



<https://laurielawless.com/aap-get-more-dogs-adopted>



**Laurie Lawless, CDBC, CPDT-KA**  
Shelter Behavior Integrations, L3C  
**Laurie@LawlessDogs.com**  
ShelterBehaviorIntegrations.com