

Here is your Top Tip number  
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**Top Tip #9**

## **Acquiring the correct energy dog.**

*Hello.*

*Today my tip is for those of you that may be possibly getting a dog from a rescue centre, or considering buying a puppy. I will pass on my personal experience, and hopefully you will benefit from my story.*

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*Regards... Glen Stanford.*

*The UK Dog Whisperer.*

I am fortunate enough to have my business based at a rescue and boarding centre in Essex, so I get to see many dogs that are looking for their 'forever' home.

They come in all shapes, colours, and sizes, and of course, it is down to personal taste, what kind of dog appeals to your eye. The visual attraction is such a strong thing, that I will not even attempt to sway you from the appearance, but there are other considerations that you may want to take on board. There is also one consideration that I feel effects opinion a little too much sometimes, and that is the '*background story*'. For some reason, everyone HAS to know the story. And of course, the more colourful the story, the more emotional attachment occurs. You know what I mean. A puppy, part of a litter found by the side of the motorway, just found in the nick of time etc etc. and we find that a relative factor for some reason. Because I work with rescue dogs that sometimes have a few 'issues', I do the complete opposite. I don't want to hear the story, as I want to give the dog every opportunity to show me the truth. How the dog ended up at the rescue, and how it ended up with a problem is not of any use to me. What the dog is today, and how I can help it, is all that matters to me.

But back to the things that maybe you should consider, and if you are honest, you should be considering what kind of lifestyle you live, because the dog is going to be sharing it with you.

So firstly, let's be sensible. If you live in a one bedroom flat, a Great Dane is not probably a wise choice, so no matter how gorgeous a dog may look, you must think about the simple logistics of having a dog that is just too big for the space. I am not saying it couldn't work, but life is complicated enough, and this is not going to help. And don't forget, even the most adorable St Bernard puppy will

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grow, and grow AND GROW!

Then there is the time factor. Some of us have hectic lives. Yes, it's great to come home from a long day, and be greeted by our ever-loving dog, but it is a long day for them as well, and they need a little more than daytime TV, and mum popping round to let them out into the garden for 10 minutes.

Then we have maintenance and cost. The cost of every vet visit (and they are never cheap), plus food, and all the extra paraphernalia, leashes, bowls, beds, etc. Plus, if you're a little too house proud, you may not appreciate the hair, dribble, vomit, muddy footprints, and all manner of mess.

But let us assume you have considered all that, and you are happy to go ahead with your choice. And if you have thought about size or breed and got a good idea what would be suitable, then there is only one major factor I strongly suggest you make a priority, and that is

## ENERGY

Yes, I have written it **large**, because it is a very VERY important consideration. Let me give you a couple of examples.

I have 4 rescue dogs at the moment. 2 from abroad, and 2 from the rescue centre in Essex. My terrier came from Essex, and I have had her nearly 5 years. When I got her, I was living with my family in a 2 bed first floor flat, so a smaller dog was what I was looking for. At the dog centre there were some very handsome dogs. A pair of Weimaraners looked very impressive, but REALLY? What was I thinking? Too large for my accommodation, and can be high energy. Some can run all day. (I can't !!). Anyway, I mentally listed around 10 that I would not consider, and about the same that I would. As it happens, the dog I eventually chose was in neither list. Why? Because she was average. Neither special or not suitable. In fact a little bit scruffy, and quiet. So, to cut a long story short, I eventually took a look at her, and decided to investigate a

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little further. A kennel hand asked me if I wanted to take her for a walk, but I was more interested in going into the 2 metre x 2 metre enclosure with her. Why? Because I needed to see her reaction at a stranger coming into her personal space. She was laying on the floor and had a squeaky toy between her front feet. I waited a few moments, and I reached for the toy. Her reaction was to move back a little. As to allow me the toy, and got a little excited that we might have a game. No anxiety, no possessiveness, no aggression, no hysterical barking, no bouncing off the walls, no negative behaviour at all. PERFECT. But mentioning energy, she did have a good demeanour, but her energy level was good as well. Even though she had good qualities, it was very important that she was not a high energy dog, that demanded just too much exercise for my lifestyle, and more importantly, it was my responsibility to give her what SHE REALLY NEEDED. As it turned out, **average** was just what I really needed.

And why did I have no interest in taking her for a walk? For 2 reasons.

1. Because most rescue dogs do not get exercised enough, and what you experience when you take them out is not a true gauge of their true energy. But if I do take them out, it is on longline to an open space, where they can burn off some energy, and I can observe them. What I don't do (which just about everyone else does) is take them for a walk on a normal dog lead, up the road. Because they have been contained, they tend to be over excited, and just drag the dog lover up the road and back again. Not a true reading of the dog at all.

2. And also, if the dog has burned off energy and is a little more relaxed, I might not see the negative traits that may lay beneath the surface. I need to test the dog when it is most likely to show these traits. It is too late once I have taken it home, and the kids fall in love with it.

So, MACEY, as she was named, came home with me, and has probably been one of the best, if not THE best dogs I have owned.

And on to story number 2, and I will try to keep it short.

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Back in the mid 1990's I decided I wanted a puppy. And the breed I chose, after meeting a breeder at a Crufts dog show, was a miniature Bull Terrier. I went to the breeder to choose my puppy. There were about 6 or 7 puppies in a small fenced pen, in the kitchen. Of course, I couldn't help looking at each puppy's 'look', and if I had seen one that caught my eye, esthetically, I may have been swayed, (and that is the trap a lot of people fall into), but fortunately, they were all similar, all dark brindle and white. So now I had to look at character and personality (I hadn't heard of 'energy' in those days).

But to get to the point. I did not choose the one climbing up the fence for attention. A lot of people see this behaviour as the dog being 'friendly' or think 'it chose me', but again, I prefer average. I chose the little plump one, sat right in the middle of the pen, just watching everything going on. She didn't look worried, she didn't make much noise, and she didn't clamber for attention. She seemed quietly confident. Once again.. PERFECT.

She was named Mable, and she was probably my best dog really. (SSHHH, don't tell Macey).

And finally, probably not the best choice.

I was called to Berkshire for a dog problem. Apparently, an 'aggressive' dog was biting the owner, and they were at their wits end.

As it transpired, it was nothing like that. It turned out to be a retired couple who had unfortunately 'lost' their old dog about a year previous, and decided to get a puppy shortly afterwards. (Never a good idea, if you are upset about the loss, as puppy needs stability, not upset). So, they decided upon a Labradoodle.

Why? I'm not sure, but that's what they chose. Now, the dog is coming up to a year old. It has boundless energy, it has grown, it is confident, and it needs loads of exercise and FUN! Although our retired couple take it out twice a day, it simply needs more. It is too strong for them on the walk, after all, it wants to RUN! but of course they fear losing it, so won't let it off the lead. And why the '*aggressive bites*', well, quite simply, they are not aggressive bites. The dog is trying to tell them that he is bored and frustrated by the slow lifestyle, and doing this by mouthing the lady.

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They never did their research properly, and more importantly, they did not understand that they needed a LOWER ENERGY LEVEL.

They thought they “*should have got a smaller dog*”, but trust me, if they don’t understand energy, and acquire a dog with the appropriate level of energy, then they will soon find out that size has got nothing to do with it.

Please take it on board.

Forget size

Forget color

Forget the story

Forget all of that.

The priority to consider seriously is

## ENERGY

Your tenth and final tip will arrive tomorrow, so until then...

*Best Wishes... Glen.*



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