

A close-up photograph of a beagle dog jumping joyfully. The dog has brown and white fur, large floppy ears, and is holding a bright green, spiky ball in its mouth. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with a clear sky and a field of golden grass at the bottom. The overall mood is happy and energetic.

All About Dogs

Adopting a Shelter Dog

Rescuing a dog from a local animal shelter is probably one of the most fulfilling things you can do.

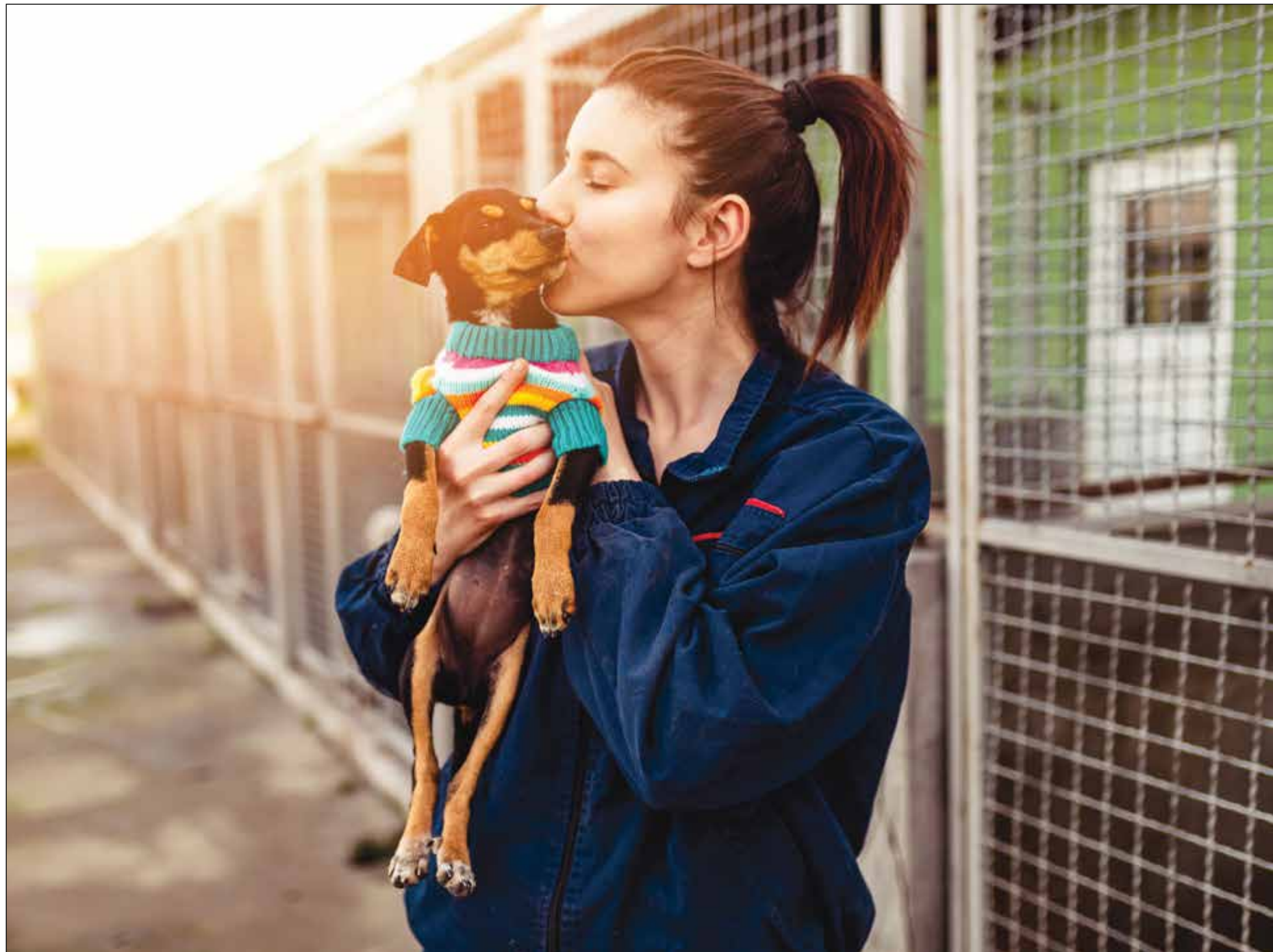
There are some things to bear in mind, however, including local rules and ordinances, behavior and food problems, and health. Keep reading to learn more about adopting a shelter dog.

GET TO KNOW YOUR SHELTER

Many local shelters have specific rules and policies about who can adopt from them and when. They may also have conditions regarding how the dog is kept. For instance, many shelters won't allow an adopted dog to live outside. They may also require vet checks, home visits and a fenced yard, among other things. Before you start perusing animals, make sure you know the shelter's policies so you aren't surprised.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Once you understand the shelter policies, it's time to prepare for bringing a new dog home. Find a place for your dog to call home base. It should be big enough for a bed or kennel, and you should have it set up before he comes home. Dog proof the area by removing anything the dog could chew on, removing breakable objects and setting up baby gates to help confine



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him to his new space. If you have other animals, this space should be one where you can easily confine the newcomer.

You also should have everything you're going to need for your new friend before you bring him home. Consider getting a collar and leash, along with an ID tag, bowls for food and water, a feeding

mat, toys, a bed and a kennel or crate.

COMING HOME

Now that you're all set up, it's time to bring home your new friend. Once you get the dog home, expect it to be nervous. Try to establish a routine and stick to it. This is important for helping your

dog settle into its new home. A shelter dog may not be housetrained or may have forgotten housetraining during his stay at the shelter, so be prepared to start housetraining as soon as you get home. Try to stay calm and quiet around the new dog and only give him attention for good behavior.

Remember, it's going to take several weeks for your shelter dog to open up. He may sleep a lot and may even act out as he settles in. Stay calm and consistent and stick to your routine as much as you can.

With a little patience and a lot of love, you'll have a new friend for life.

Preventing Heartworms

Heartworm disease is an infection of parasitic worms in the heart, lungs and blood vessels of an animal. It's been reported in all 50 states, but is most prevalent around the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts and along the Mississippi River and tributaries.

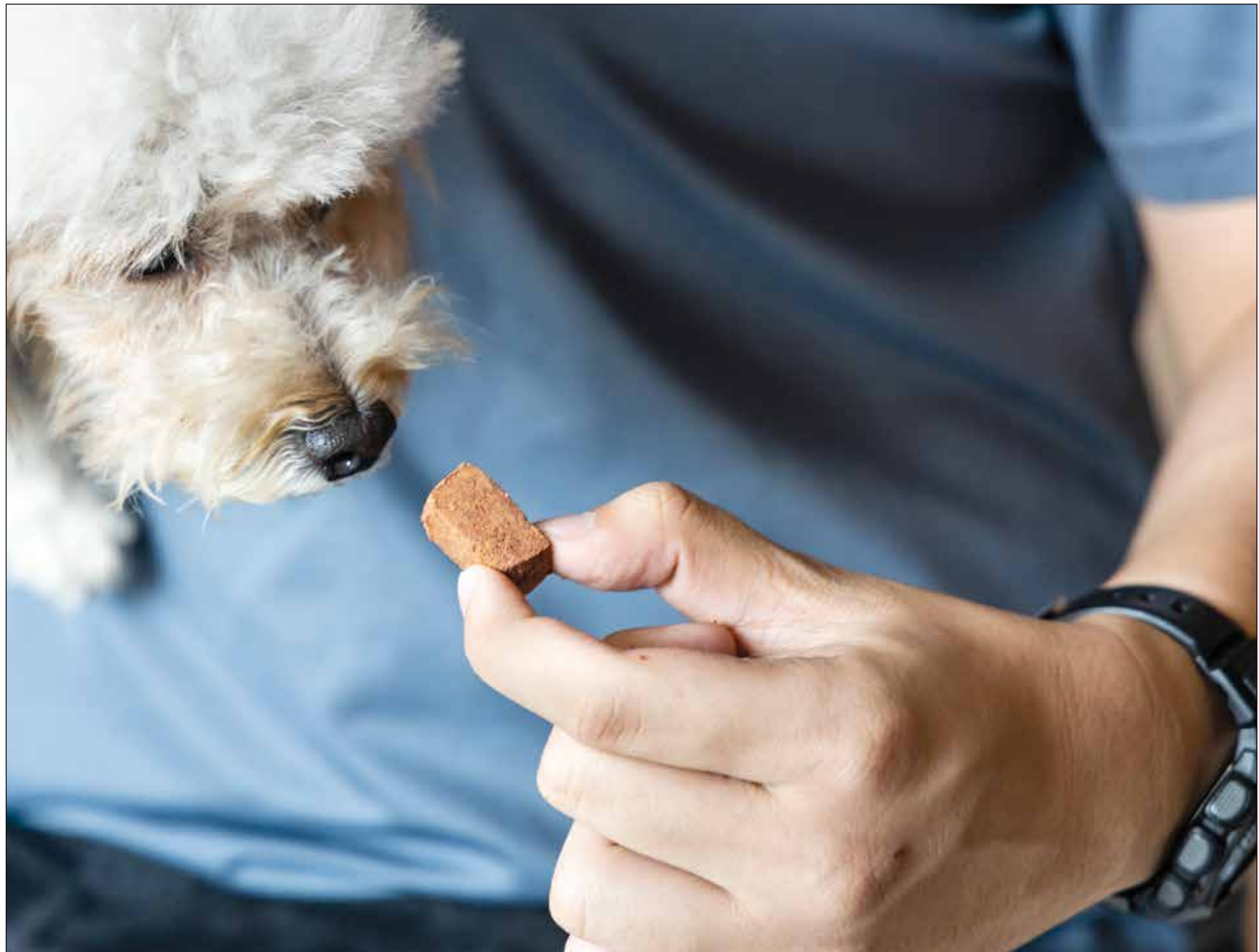
HOW DO DOGS GET HEARTWORMS?

Heartworms are an infestation of the parasitic worm *Dirofilaria immitis* through the bite of a mosquito. When a mosquito bites an infected animal, it picks up heartworm offspring, which it then spreads to other animals, including dogs, cats and ferrets. Once infected, the severity of the disease depends on how the dog's body responds, his activity level and the severity of the disease. It can damage the dog's heart, lungs, liver and kidneys, and will eventually kill the dog.

Symptoms of heartworm disease include:

- A cough or tiredness after moderate activity.
- A sickly appearance, trouble breathing and signs of heart failure.

A very sick dog can get caval syndrome, where there are so many worms that blood flowing back to the heart is



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blocked. Most dogs with caval syndrome die, even with surgical intervention.

Heartworms can live inside your dog from five to seven years, and adult heartworms can be 4 inches to up to 1 foot long. The average number of heartworms found in an infected dog is 15, but it can be as

high as 250.

TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

Most of the time, heartworm disease can be treated, but it's not easy on the dog and it can be expensive. Life-threatening complications can occur, including blood clots in the

dog's lungs.

Prevention is the best treatment. Your vet can tell you all your options for preventing heartworms, including topical solutions, pills and injections. Don't treat just in the summer when mosquitoes are more active. Dogs can get heartworms year round.

TESTING

Your vet can test your dog for heartworms and will usually do so at their annual visit. A dog should also be tested if you forget to give heartworm prevention, if the dog recently switched heartworm prevention, or if the dog traveled to a new area.

Routine Vet Care

Dogs should see a veterinarian at least once a year.

Puppies will have to go to the vet more frequently as they get their vaccinations, usually every three to four weeks until they are about four months old. Older dogs — those older than 7 or 8 — should also go twice a year to catch geriatric illnesses earlier.

SPAYING AND NEUTERING

All dogs should be spayed or neutered unless they will be bred, Merck says. Intact animals can have serious conditions later, such as prostate disease in males and mammary cancer in females. Having a dog fixed can also improve behavior. Females are usually fixed around six months old, and males are fixed between five and 10 months old, depending on breed and size.

VACCINATIONS

Your dog will also be vaccinated against common illnesses at his yearly appointment, including distemper, parvovirus and rabies. A rabies vaccination may be required by local laws; make sure to keep your dog's rabies tag and certificate handy. Other vaccinations may also be important because of disease that are more prevalent in certain parts of the country, such as Lyme disease. Your vet



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can tell you which ones you need.

DENTAL CARE

Just like you, your dog needs regular dental care, too. At home, you can help keep their teeth in good shape by feeding dry dog food and giv-

ing them toys that help clean their teeth. You can also brush their teeth with a toothpaste that's safe for dogs. Your veterinarian may also recommend a program of professional cleanings to reduce plaque, which causes gingivitis and periodontal disease.

PARASITES

Your vet may also test for and treat several parasites that live on and in your dog. The most common are fleas and ticks, and you can use a variety of topical medications, pills or injections to keep those itchy pests away. More serious are

internal parasites, which are also prevented by many flea and tick medications. It's important to keep your dog on a reliable heartworm preventative year-round.

Your veterinarian can help you find the parasite control medication that's right for you.

Best Breeds for Small Spaces

What you're looking for in a new best friend for your small apartment or home isn't just size. There are plenty of large breeds that are couch potatoes. Activity level is a better measure.

Keep reading to learn more about a few of the American Kennel Club's recommendations for dogs that could be happy in a smaller space.

AMERICAN ESKIMO DOG

The AKC says this dog has a quick mind and striking snowball looks. The American Eskimo Dog — which actually has nothing to do with Eskimos or Inuit peoples — come in three sizes: standard, miniature and toy. The tallest are about 19 inches at the shoulder, and the shortest around 9 inches. They weigh from 6 to 35 pounds. These pure white dogs have a dense coat and a smiling face.

BASSET HOUND

These low-slung, long-eared hounds can weigh up to 65 pounds but are a mere 15 inches tall. They are scenting hounds, second only to the bloodhound. The AKC says they're steadfastly loyal dogs who are mild-mannered and agreeable. Basset Hounds are prone to becoming overweight, so watch this dog's diet and



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make sure it gets plenty of exercise.

BICHON FRISE

This tiny white puffball is a hypoallergenic breed with a plush, soft coat. They're small dogs, standing less than 1 foot tall and weighing less than 20 pounds. The AKC says they're ideal city dogs that are adaptable and friendly.

BOSTON TERRIER

These little black-and-white

terriers are instantly recognizable. They are 15-17 inches tall and weight in at a maximum of 25 pounds. They are great city dogs, the AKC says, and are people-oriented and bright.

COCKER SPANIEL

Cockers are, on average around 14 inches tall and weigh up to 30 pounds. They're known for their dreamy eyes and personality. The AKC says they make good playmates for children and are easily trained.

Cocker spaniels have coats that need professional grooming, so take that into consideration.

GREYHOUND

This speedster is uncommonly suited to life in a small space. They range up to 30 inches tall and weigh up to 70 pounds. He's a coursing hound, bred to pursue prey, and is the fastest breed of dog. But the AKC says these dogs often make for gentle, sweet companions.

TEDDY ROOSEVELT TERRIER

The Teddy Roosevelt terrier is named for the president and the AKC says it's a lively, friendly dog with a strong protective nature and pack instincts. They are 8-15 inches in height and can weigh up to 25 pounds.

These dogs learn quickly, the AKC says, and excel in sports like agility and obedience. They get along with other dogs and easily adapt to many lifestyles.

How to Choose a Dog Food

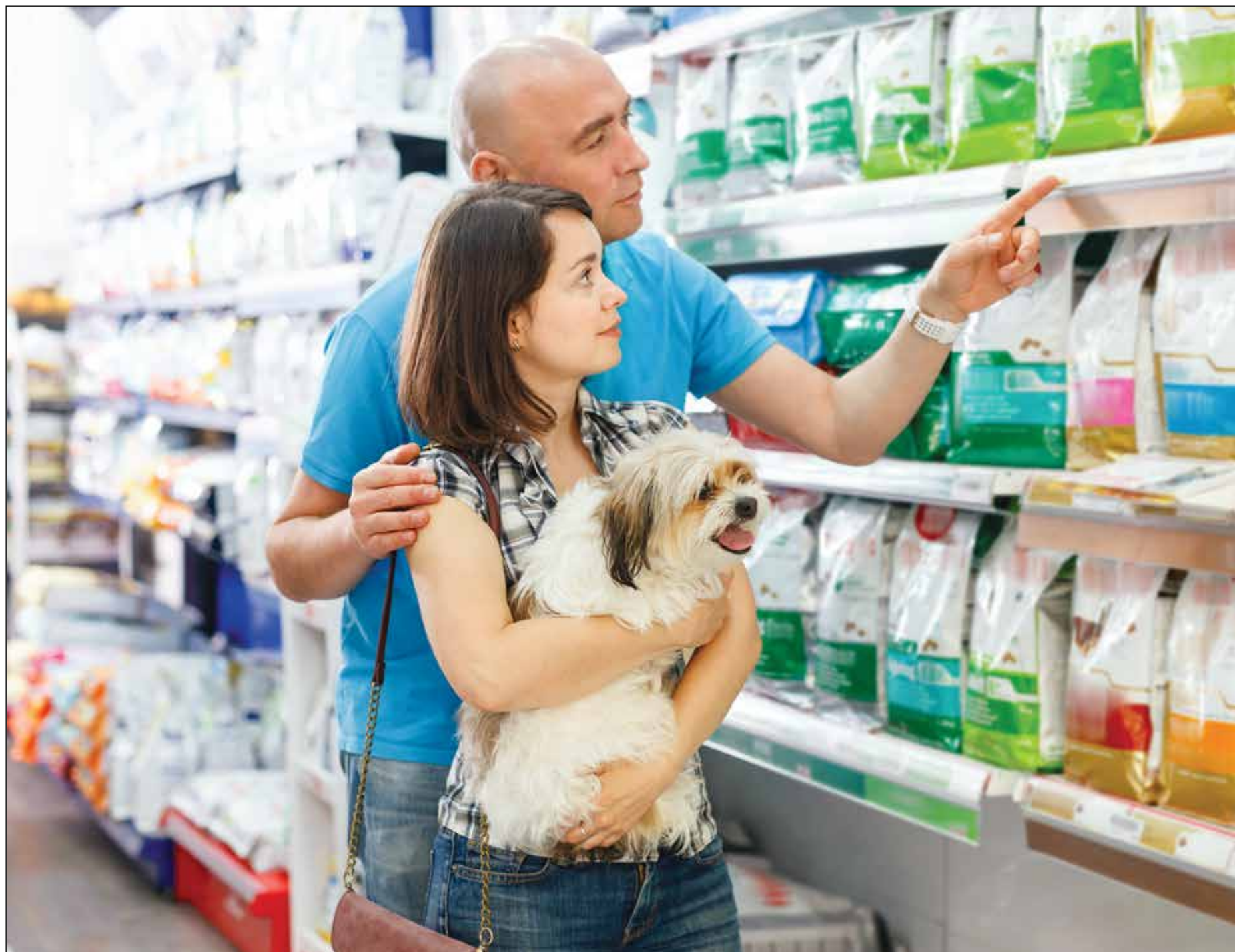
Unlike our feline friends, dogs are not strictly carnivores. Their food is more complex, and most dry kibble and canned dog foods are strictly regulated and tested to provide all the nutrients your dog needs to stay healthy.

A good quality dog food, the American Kennel Club says, should contain meat, vegetables, grains and fruits.

READ THE LABEL

Just like with human food, a good place to judge the quality of a dog food is by reading the label. You want to look for ingredients, nutritional adequacy and feeding guidelines, the AKC says.

Dog foods are tightly regulated. The Association of American Feed Control Officials says that if a dog food's name includes an ingredient, like chicken or salmon without the word "with," it must include at least 95% of that ingredient. If the name contains words like platter, dinner or entree, it must include at least 25% but less than 95%. If the name includes the word "with" — as in "dog food with beef" — that ingredient only has to be 3% of the product. If the name has the word "flavor," like beef-flavored dog food,



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then no percentage is required.

Many states also require the minimum amount of nutrients a pet food must contain, as well as the maximum amount of moisture and crude fiber. Labels must also display the percentage of crude protein, crude fat, crude fiber and water. Ingredients must be list-

ed in descending order by weight. Each ingredient must be listed individually and cannot be described collectively, like animal protein products.

If a label claims to be "complete and balanced" or "100% nutritious," this means the food has met the government standards and provides com-

plete and balanced nutrition for all adult dogs.

GRAIN-FREE FOOD

The AKC says there's not a lot of evidence to support the benefits of grain-free dog food. In fact, the diet may be associated with an increase in heart disease in some dogs. The FDA is

investigating a potential link between grain-free dog food and canine dilated cardiomyopathy.

Remember that dog nutrition advice isn't one-size-fits-all. Your veterinarian will have the best advice on what to feed your dog based on his size, breed, activity level and more.

Low-Maintenance Dog Breeds

When you're considering adding a new four-legged friend to your life, you need to consider how much time and energy you're going to need to invest in keeping your new buddy healthy and groomed.

Here are a few low-maintenance dog breeds recommended by Rover.com.

1. Poodle. The great thing about poodles is that they come in several sizes: toy, miniature and standard. They barely shed and are smart, but may need professional grooming.

2. West Highland White Terrier. These scrappy little guys are a sturdy breed with plenty of attitude. They do shed, but not much, and have a pure white coat.

3. Portuguese Water Dog. The former first dogs in the White House, Sunny and Bo, are this big, fluffy breed. As the name suggests, the Portuguese water dog loves water and is an energetic companion.

4. Dachshund. These short stacks are long on love and in body. They come in smooth, wirehaired and long-haired versions, and the wirehaired will shed the least.

5. Greyhound. A speedster at work, at home, greyhounds tend to be sweet and mellow. They also have short fur and shed very little.



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6. Brussels Griffon. These little guys have expressive faces and hardly shed. But you will have to brush them periodically.

7. Chihuahua. These little guys come with big attitude and are perfect for apartments. The short-haired variety doesn't shed as much as lon-

ger-haired chihuahuas, making this dog the total small-space package.

Remember that no dog is maintenance free. You'll still

have to exercise, train, feed and water your pup. And you should budget for regular vet fees and for boarding if you go out of town.

Tech for the Dog Lover



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Technology can do just about anything these days, including throw a ball for your dog. Here are some new gadgets and gizmos to keep Fido safe, healthy and occupied.

ACTIVITY TRACKERS

Yes, it's a Fitbit for Fido. There are several models available, and they either clip onto or hang from the collar. The LINK AKC Smart Dog

Collar monitors activity and gives you real-time GPS tracking for your dog (handy if you've got a Houdini on your hands). It also features a built-in LED light and a sound feature to help with training.

The Whistle 3 is a waterproof collar attachment that tracks your pet's location and links up to your smartphone. Warning, though: It uses cellular networks. So if you've got spotty coverage, this may not work for you.

TOYS

There are lots of toys out there that let you give Rover a run even if

you're not home. The GoBone (not for heavy chewers) lets you roll a bone-shaped toy around your house with your smartphone. It can also move on its own to keep your dog amused throughout the day.

The Furbo dog camera lets you use your smartphone to toss your pup treats from afar. It also alerts you when your dog is barking and let you see what's going on.

If you've got a pup that's obsessed with fetching a ball, the iFetch has you covered. It's an automatic pet ball launcher that saves your arm from multiple throws.

The CleverPet Hub challenges

your dog to work out a puzzle to get their treat. The puzzle gets more difficult as the dog progresses. You control the schedule from your phone. The PupPod is another food-based challenge game that keeps your dog on his toes and is controlled from your smartphone.

FEEDERS

You can link smart feeders to your phone to let you give your pets a meal without being home. Some, like the Feed and Go Smart Pet Feeder, even include a webcam and a recorder to let you call your dog.