

## Are you right for a Boxer?



A Boxer is a joyful, silly, fun-loving, affectionate and occasionally stubborn breed of dog. He is what he is. Do not think you can mold him into a dog that will accommodate your lifestyle. To even try could mean breaking the spirit and essence of this spectacular breed.

One must weigh carefully, the decision to bring a Boxer into his or her life and home. You must truly be a "dog person" to coexist happily with a Boxer. This is not the breed for everyone. In fact, he can be a regular nightmare for some.

Why? Because...

**Boxers rule but they also drool!** They pass gas, give wet kisses, jump up to greet you and snore too! If the sound of *any* of this makes you wince, you are not right for a Boxer! If an attention seeking, 70+ pound slobbering lap dog isn't appealing to you, *please* do not acquire a Boxer!

The basic fact that Boxer Rescue has to exist is evidence enough that too many people get one of these...



...because he is adorable, cute and playful. As precious as Boxer puppies are, they don't stay that way or that size forever. People seem to forget that a cute Boxer puppy turns into this...



...a big, handsome, full grown adult dog that requires a lot of your time and attention. A Boxer in his adolescence is NOT easy to handle for the novice or unprepared person.

### Boxer Slurps

Boxers are a very friendly and affectionate breed! They are referred to as an "in-your-face" breed. They are "shadows," often following you from room to room - even waking from a nap to do so! They crawl in your lap, jump up on you and love to give those sloppy wet Boxer kisses. SLURP!



### Energy level

Boxers are late to mature (that means they act like puppies and do not tend to "settle down" until the age of 3 or 4 years). Boxers require daily exercise!

Taking a quick walk down the street is not sufficient. A Boxer needs a good play session with his human and a toy/ball or another dog(s) in order for him to expend his energy. Of course, an older adult Boxer needs less exercise than one under 4 years, but even the silver deserves to be kept happy and fit by engaging in some amount of exercise each day with his human. Many Boxers end up in rescues or shelters because their families did little research and were not aware of the incredible amount of energy they have.



Callie, at warp speed!

Boxers who do not receive proper exercise will most likely be very rambunctious and/or destructive. A tired Boxer is a well behaved Boxer! Boxers under the age of 1 year should not be permitted to overextend himself, or participate in excessive running or jumping, as his bones are growing and it can contribute to major orthopedic problems down the road, such as damage to the cruciate ligament etc...

### Shedding & Grooming

Boxers *do* shed hair, even though it is not in clumps. The Boxer breed is especially susceptible to [seasonal flank alopecia](#). Providing a quality food, vitamin supplements with Omega Fatty Acids, Flax Seed or Salmon Oil in addition to regular brushing, usually keeps shedding to a minimum. Boxers are not considered high maintenance when it comes to grooming, but remember to clip those nails regularly!



### Boxers & Children

Boxers have great affection reserved especially for children (and older adults too). Most can recognize the need to be more patient and gentle with these fragile beings; however, some are better at executing it than others! Boxers have the tendency to bowl over young children when they get excited or while playing. If you would find this unacceptable, do not get a Boxer dog!!!!

### Boxers with people

While Boxers in general, tend to be protective towards their family members, some are better at it than others! A Boxer should *never* be acquired for the sole purpose of guarding. It's been said "A Boxer will lead a thief to the jewels

for a pat on the head."

They are absolutely dependant upon the companionship of their families! This is not a dog to be left alone unattended for hours on end. They **MUST** live indoors with their families. It is common to find a Boxer who suffers from separation anxiety. They need to be around people and they thrive on this special companionship. Boxers can develop unwelcome behaviors such as digging, barking and chewing if ignored or not cared for properly. They have the potential to do a great deal of damage (they are powerful chewers) if they are not in a suitable environment.

The Boxer generally makes a fine Therapy Dog. This breed is known for their uncanny knack of being compassionate and "in tune" with the feelings of people around them. If you are sad, they'll lick your tears and know to be quiet and sit next to you. If you want to run around and play, so will they.

### **Boxer Health**

Boxer guardians should have a bit of money tucked away for unplanned vet visits (besides the annual check-up for vaccines and heartworm test). Boxers are predisposed to cancers--namely mast cell tumors and lymphomas. Skin conditions such as demodex (mange), allergies, hot spots, "skin-tags" etc...are also common. Cardiomyopathy is a concern and Boxers are susceptible to "bloat" which is deadly if not treated immediately.

Click [here](#) for a list of health concerns specific to the Boxer breed.

Dog food of poor quality can exacerbate or bring about a skin condition and other health problems. By offering high quality dog food and treats (this means no meat by-products), pentobarbital (used to euthanize pets and diseased livestock), BHA, BHT, Ethoxyquin, or other artificial and chemical preservatives, you could substantially decrease your dog's chances of developing skin irritations and other illnesses.

### **Training & Behavior**

Boxers require obedience training to teach them proper manners. A dog that is expected to behave in every day situations will regard "obedience" as his regular "job." Whether you do it yourself or enroll him in basic obedience, it is always recommended for this breed. Boxers are powerful and strong dogs. They require committed and capable handlers and caregivers. Boxers do not respond well to repetition. Instead, they excel when given a few short training sessions. Repeating a command when the Boxer has already done it correctly can be counterproductive. The Boxer is intelligent! HE knows he did it right--YOU know he did it right. Move on.



Many Boxers excel at agility!

If you desire a dog who will do what you say when you say it, every time you say it, do not acquire a Boxer. Boxers are noted for being a bit stubborn, which sometimes earns them the false reputation of being "stupid." If you stick to a non-repetitive, fresh and fun training routine, your Boxer will most likely be the most awesome companion you could ever hope for. A Boxer lives to please his human. It is imperative that you use **positive reinforcement techniques** when training a Boxer. Physical, harsh, or violent reprimanding is never recommended, nor is it acceptable for any animal.

### Chewing

Most Boxers love to chew. Coffee tables, remote controls, shoes, chair legs, door frames etc... are all fair game. It is imperative that you provide your Boxer with stimulating toys or activities to do when you cannot be around. It is your duty to provide a chewing outlet for your Boxer. A busy dog is a happy dog. We suggest a KONG filled with treats or another delectable concoction, a food cube, treat ball, or nylabone type product. Never offer Greenies™, rawhides, cow hooves or pig's ears when you cannot be in the room to supervise because they are all huge choking hazards (some FBR volunteers do not recommend using any of these products at *all*, as they have been linked to canine deaths on more than one occasion).

### Eating Habits

Some Boxers are messy eaters. You may find more kibble on the floor around their bowls, stuck to the wall, or caught in their jowls, than what actually made it into their tummies. Many Boxers send spit, slobber and chunks of food flying across the room after they shake their heads and many consider the couch cushions their personal napkins. This can easily be wiped up or sponged off daily, by individuals who wouldn't be particularly bothered by these behaviors.

### Boxers & other dogs

Aggression is NOT a trait of a well-bred and socialized Boxer AT ALL. Boxers who are socialized on a regular basis, from puppyhood, generally relate very well with other dogs. Boxers seem to enjoy the company of other Boxers, as they have the same style of play ("boxing"). Many Boxer breeders and rescuers will agree that placement of Boxers of the opposite sex (male with female, spayed and neutered of course!) is the best arrangement.



The information on this page applies to well-bred and temperament tested Boxer dogs from reputable breeders. It is not meant to deter anyone from acquiring a Boxer; rather, we feel it's best to inform interested people about this breed in an honest and frank manner BEFORE a Boxer is purchased or adopted.



Boxers have become a commercialized breed. If you purchase a Boxer from a substandard breeder (referred to as a "backyard breeder", who advertises puppies in the newspaper), or pet store (puppy mill), your Boxer may not display these standards and characteristics.

You can help keep the number of Boxers who end up in rescue down by NOT purchasing a Boxer puppy unless you have ascertained that your lifestyle is one that would meet the needs of this breed. Pets are not rentals for people to keep until they outgrow their purpose. Please be a committed pet guardian for life!

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