

DOG TALK *With Nancy Truax*



The Right Dog for You

There's a shape, size and temperament for everyone

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As a volunteer for a dog rescue, I am constantly introduced to new dogs. I pretty much like them all, although I seem to have a special affinity for the underdog – the shy ones who will come out of their shells with some attention and some string cheese. I am certainly not in the market for a dog, as I already have the delightful Doodles, and Ed has mentioned that if I bring home another pooch, one of us will need to find a new home. However, I occasionally fall in love with one of the rescue dogs and find myself wondering if it is a dog that I could actually adopt.

Although I am many years from having another dog, it hasn't stopped me from pondering what kind of pup I

would add to the family when the time comes. At the rescue, I meet every description of dog possible. From the youthful to the more mature, from the lean to the plump, the reserved to the social, the teeny-tiny to the rather large, I am exposed to quite a variety of dogs. Add some of the unusual breed combinations, and the possibilities are endless.

In my imaginings, my next pooch is probably going to be medium-sized. I don't know exactly what that means, except that it will be small enough that I feel superior, and large enough that I don't trip over it as my age advances. The pooch will, of course, be housebroken. Between my children and the number of puppies that I have potty-trained in the past, I am in no mood to do it again. (Fortunately, Ed arrived on the scene already trained.) The dog will be short enough that is does not have the ability to counter-surf, or for that matter, the ability to turn on a stove burner. My apologies to the Doodles, but one kitchen fire is enough.

My next pooch will have little or no interest in the television. He or she will be able to discern that the animals on

the screen are no threat, and will not attempt to play with or attack them. The pooch will know that when the doorbell rings on the television, that there is no need to run to the front door and take an aggressive position. The dog will also understand that if I am watching a youtube video of a barking dog on my laptop, that there is no need to bark back. My next dog will have a healthy fear of the Christmas tree. He or she will intuit that the ornaments are beautiful, and will understand that the look of the tree will not be improved by the removal of ornaments.

The future pup will be needy and love to sit in my lap. (The size of the dog relative to my lap is unimportant. JoJo, who weighs 75 pounds, loves to sit in my lap.) He or she will have a long tail, which will wag furiously when I return home from an errand. Because my children are gone and Ed is often at work when I arrive home, it is the dog's job to let me know that someone is excited that I have returned.

This medium-sized dog will have a tiny little bark. He or she will not use it in the car or while I am on the phone. The pooch will be incredibly social, and will enjoy interacting with strangers, cats, and other dogs. And one other thing. I have had dogs that have shed enough hair in one week to make an entirely new dog. I have also had non-shedding dogs that require expensive grooming approximately every eight weeks. I would really like a self-grooming dog – one that neither sheds nor requires professional grooming.

I honestly don't feel like I am asking for a lot. It's not like I need the pooch to clean the house or cook dinner!

