

## Participant 1

Family adopted a terrier named Kansas when he was 6 or 7. She was a very high-energy puppy and pooped in the car on the way home. His parents wanted to get him a dog because they both had dogs when growing up. **Having a dog builds a sense of responsibility.** Helping to walk and feed. Caring for something other than yourself. Kansas was a Christmas present from the shelter.

If he were to adopt an animal now, he **would look at local shelters**. One private local one has a lot of dogs, cats, and other animals. Also the city shelter. He would go to the shelter itself.

**Would be nice to look at the website, but better to go in-person to meet a few.** Get the total feel and personal touch.

Why would adopt? "I love animals. Love dogs." Goes beyond just responsibility. **"They're a part of the family."** "From an emotional standpoint, they can balance out the craziness of life." "Fun to have other beings around." "They're always going to do something funny or why did you do this." **"They all have their own personality. Find one that mirrors yours."** **Companionship, security, and the social nature of dogs.**

Must-haves: **good energy/independence balance.** Not super needy, ok to sit quietly. "I don't always want to be bothered." **Enjoys doing different activities like walks, playing, and being social.** Mirrors own personality. Likes others but also likes time to self.

**Deal-breakers: super aggressive.** "We don't need a security guard." "I've been around pitbulls, rottweilers, and German Shepherds and it just depends on the situation." **Having an aggressive dog is "not necessarily a risk I want to take."**

**Medium-sized dog, so probably not a little yappy dog.** But open to being flexible. If found a cute sheepdog that sheds a lot, would just invest in a good vacuum. A lab might be good. Very energetic, mischievous, loving. Same for golden retrievers. **Lovable goofball.**

## Participant 2

For Suzie, I had gone to the **adoption fair at the pet shop** in a nearby shopping center. AARF was out there. They had a **binder with photos of the dogs that were available.** I wanted a **smaller dog with a beard.** **Suzie was the breed (terrier) that was wanted and she looked playful (this turned out not to be true).**

**Found Lulu on the county animal shelter website,** which is sadly a kill shelter. They only have 10 days to get adopted. **They have pictures of all the dogs and cats.** A photographer took a photo of her with a necklace on. **Each animal has a little bio with where they were found, approximate age, and whether they are spayed/neutered yet.** All kinds of choices. **The next day after finding the photo (actually went to see her sister, who had gotten adopted already) and took Rosie (other dog) with us.** Rosie's ears were back and didn't seem to enjoy the trip. Lulu really did seem to keep Rosie younger.

**It was important to make sure she got along with other dogs and to make sure she didn't shed. She and Rosie got along, and the guy picked at her coat to show she didn't shed (this also turned out not to be true). Wanted a dog that was relatively young, but not a puppy. So about two years old. This age is not as naughty and they know some things already, but is still a funny, goofy stage.**

**The reason for getting Lulu was because Suzie had died and Rosie needed another dog. She was starting to act old. "Being a solo dog is kind of lonely and sad." Participant also wanted another dog.**

**Size was also important. Not too big, so 50 - 60 lbs as big as willing to go. Husband likes "doggy dogs," so nothing too little and yappy. "Mixes are healthier" due to not being as inbred.**

**Advice to others: do research (books or online) for what you're looking for in a dog. "Keep an open mind." First impressions are really important. "[Husband] is really not going to like this dog." "You can read the dog's personality in the first few minutes," although you do have to take into account that it's a scary place.**

**After adopting, you should take to a trusted vet to screen for any major health problems. You will probably have to go through all the adoption paperwork before you can take them. Pay an adoption and spay/neuter fee. Very reasonable price, but still kind of a risk. Should be able to bring back if major problem, although then you might already be attached.**

**Has a neighborhood who is a really good researcher. Does boxer rescue. Different breeds will have rescue websites. Lady gets to know the dogs really well and helps with placement. For example, knew that a very boingy dog would not be a good match for a lady with health problems. A foster person will be able to tell you if the dog is good with other dogs and strangers.**