

Is the Vizsla the Right Breed for You?

1. Vizslas are High-Energy Dogs, are you a High-Energy Family?

People who like to be out in nature, or to go walking, jogging or running are good matches for this breed. Vizslas need many hours of off-leash running per week, which is very difficult to fit into the busy schedule of a household with kids, or a home where the owners are not home for most of the day and cannot get home early enough to take the dog for a good long run. You need to be not only willing, but eager, to spend at least 7 hours per week going for long hikes at remote natural areas far from traffic. Do not assume that you can change your lifestyle to accommodate your Vizsla's exercise requirements – most people find it very difficult to change their routine – so if you are a low-activity person, or prefer your activity to take place in a gym, Vizslas are not for you. If your family loves to spend lots of regular active time outdoors, this breed may be ideal for you and you may have found a breed that really brings out the best in you. One of our favourite things about Vizslas is that we can spend time out in nature with our Vizslas instead of using that time in grooming. As a short-haired sporting dog, Vizslas have the advantage of being a 'drip-dry and go' dog that needs only the basic care common to all dogs (nails, teeth, ears, eyes and the occasional bath).

2. Vizslas are Strong and Enthusiastic, are you Strong and Patient?

Vizslas are very strong dogs. They are all muscle and sinew and made to run all day long. They also love people and other dogs. This means that they will easily knock young children over. They are also a hunting dog that likes to retrieve and chase, and if not well trained may nip children in play. Finally, they will pull on the leash when walking unless trained not to do so at a young age. Even the smallest female Vizsla can pull you right off your feet. This can be very frustrating and first time dog owners in particular may lose patience at this stage. Ideally, no member of your family is under 12 years old so that all of you can handle the dog and not get knocked or pulled over. This also means that Vizslas are not fragile, so they can do some very active things such as agility. If you are seeking a sporting companion that can keep up with you, this breed may be for you.

3. Vizslas are Needy, Stubborn and Sensitive; are you Tolerant, Positive and Consistent?

Vizslas have been nicknamed the *Velcro Dog* because of their need to be with you all the time, preferably stuck to your body somewhere. This means that they want to be on your lap, in the bathroom with you, on the sofa with you, and just generally in your face all the time. Many people find this behaviour annoying and would prefer a dog that is more independent and willing to hang out on their own. Vizslas do not hang out on their own – ever. They are also very sensitive and require positive, consistent training and care-giving. If harsh techniques are used they may shut down, or resist; even refuse to work for you. This is because they are also stubborn. A stubborn sensitive dog can be a challenge to train, even for people that have had other breeds in the past. They are not like a Golden or Labrador Retriever, or a Shetland Sheepdog – always willing to work for you. Vizslas are easily bored and need an enthusiastic trainer who can remain calm, positive and inventive - no matter what. Each person in the family must be willing and able to follow a very positive and consistent dog training routine. We will not sell a dog to a home that will not use positive training techniques. If you are interested in maintaining a positive attitude towards life in general, and your dog in particular, and are willing to be flexible and creative in your training, then this breed may suit you very well.

4. Vizslas are Thinkers; Can you Out-Think Them?

Vizslas love problem-solving and unless you provide outlets for them to figure things out, they will invent their own games and behaviours: often these involve finding any edible or chewable object no matter how well hidden, or learning how to open doors and cupboards. The best Vizsla owners will provide a job for their dog to do to keep them happy, such as competitive obedience, agility or field tests. These activities should be considered as fun activities you can do with your Vizsla for their lifetime. The idea is that obedience or other training is its own reward, and should not end when your dog has basic manners or gets their first title. Vizslas need an ongoing occupation that allows them to learn and grow with you. As we are breeding Vizslas for the purpose of improving the breed and acquiring excellent Vizslas for our own breeding, show, field, agility and obedience purposes, we also prefer to place our puppies with families that are willing to have their dogs shown in conformation shows. If you are seeking a performance dog in one of the many activities open to dogs, the Vizsla is an ideal partner. Because of their need to explore, Vizslas should not be left unsupervised at any age. They should be crated in their den (a kennel or crate) while you are away from home or not paying attention to them. Proper crate-training protects dogs from potentially life-threatening situations in the home and also make for a happier dog that is less likely to have separation anxiety and home-protection issues.