



The Cool Dad's Dog

Special Section

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## How to Choose Your New Best Friend

By Grayson Schaffer and Josh Dean

Photographs by Blossom Berkofsky

There are 170 dog breeds, but these five are the only ones you need to know. Whether you want a booze-brunch companion, a half-buddy/half-babysitter mix, or the canine version of Paul Bunyan, we've got the right breed for you

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## Your New Best Friend



### British Labrador Retriever

**It's the new:**

• Golden retriever

**Potential names:**

• Buddy, Champ

**Skills:**

• Fetching; knocking drinks off the coffee table with that wagging tail

→ Here in the U.S.A., we don't just breed bigger, dumber people. The American Labrador tends to be a muscle-bound, stick-crazed problem child, running roughshod over its suburban domain. Its forebearer, the British Lab, is bred for obedience, intelligence, and a svelte, streamlined look. We know—it's like saying cricket is a better sport than baseball. But the British Lab lives up to its pedigree, and as Colonel Peter Hawker gushed in his

(awesomely titled) 1814 *Instructions to Young Sportsmen in All That Relates to Guns and Shooting*, "there is not his equal in the canine race." The best breeders still select for nose-work skills, which is why British Labs are often employed for finding lost persons, sniffing out drugs, and retrieving shotgunned ducks from ponds. But they're just as happy picking up your newspaper and palling around with your 2.5 kids.



The Outdoorsman's Sidekick

### Australian Shepherd

**It's the new:**

• Border collie

**Potential names:**

• Patch, Bear, Patagonia

**Preferred mode of transportation:**

• Vintage Land Rover Defender

→ There's a reason Aussies are known as "Velcro dogs"—the devoted breed will happily attach itself to your hip and follow wherever you go, whether it's a brisk walk around Bonnaroo or the entire Appalachian Trail. The ranchers who bred them would ask the dogs to babysit in a pinch; they're born to herd and don't care whether it's cows or rowdy toddlers that they're keeping in line. They're also tireless, intelligent, and, like many of their owners, awesome at Frisbee. The Aussie is one of the only breeds you can actually take mountain biking—they have no problem keeping up and aren't dumb enough to jump in front of your bike or try to eat the tires. All that energy and athleticism can make them maddeningly hyperactive, so be sure you have an acre or forty of open space and that you train your Aussie early.



A Big-Ass Dog for a Badass Man

### Bullmastiff

**It's the new:**

• Doberman pinscher

**Potential names:**

• Anything but Spike

**Required accessory:**

• Dedicated slobber towel

→ Rottweilers are great if you get your kicks frightening small children. But if you want an awe-inspiring dog that will also make women go "Aww!" this is your breed. Centuries ago, British gamekeepers mixed the lumbering mastiff with the squat, tough English bulldog to create the bullmastiff, a canine bounty hunter adept at tracking and subduing poachers without tearing them to bits. They *could* treat a human like a chew toy, but that's not their style; bullmastiffs are docile, slobbery teddy bears at heart. Oddly enough, given their size, they make great apartment dogs. A male can easily reach 130 pounds, but the breed doesn't need much space or exercise, so look elsewhere for a running buddy.



Keep That Puppy on This Leash

→ You should never dress your dog, and you should never, ever dress your dog to look like you. The rule-proving exception? Filson's canine gear. The bridle leather lead and collar are as rugged as Filson's bridle leather belt, which you should already own. Just untuck your shirt when you take Champ out for a walk.

Collar, \$36 | Leash, \$46 | Filson.com



## Your New Best Friend

### Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier

**It's the new:**

• Portuguese water dog

**Potential names:**

• Errol, Tuffy, Lord Byron von Nottingsworth III

**Summers on:**

• Nantucket; Mustique; the yacht

→ There are few options for the man who's allergic to dogs, and fewer still if he wants a dog with the silky blond locks of an SMU Tri-Delt but simply can't tolerate any shedding on his antique Persian carpets. For that man, there's the wheaten—a hypoallergenic Irish breed that, despite its pageant looks, was developed for fox and badger hunting. These days you'll

find them mostly on the manicured lawns of country estates, where the only things they chase are German luxury sedans. Ignore the *terrier* in the name—they're nothing like their hyperactive, ankle-biting cousins. Wheatens are fun-loving and lively but also laid-back, which means they're just as happy at your country home as in your city pied-à-terre. That flaxen hair does require regular brushing—but that's what the help is for.

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### The Downtown Dog

### Brussels Griffon

**It's the new:**

• French bulldog

**Potential names:**

• Chewie, Jean-Pierre, Pee-wee

**Preferred mode of transportation:**

• Your man bag

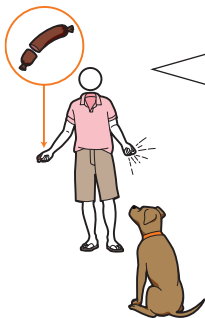
→ The Brussels griffon is not only the perfect size for apartment life; it's genetically engineered for the big city, having been bred by cab drivers to keep rats out of stables, back when taxis were literally horse-powered. Even now the breed will earn its keep by hunting

down rodents, if your neighborhood is still, you know, "bohemian." Brussels griffons make better roommates than most people on Craigslist—they'll get along just fine with your girlfriend's cat, require very little grooming, and despite being ballsy rat-assassins, aren't as yippy and feisty as their size would

lead you to believe. Like many urbanites, the Brussels can get moody and high-strung when bored, so keep yours entertained. Take it out to brunch, toss the ball around the loft, or dress the Ewok-faced canine in a leather vest and reenact *Return of the Jedi*.



### The Popped Collar of Canines



### The Best Way to Tame Your Beast

→ Not training your dog is like not educating your kid. All you end up with is a heedless and troublesome brat that no one can stand. The good news: Dogs *want* to listen to you. You just need to learn to speak their language. And no, we're not talking about that ridiculous dog-whispering b.s. your grandmother swears by.

These days, clicker training is the preferred method for raising dogs who behave like they went to Eton. In Psychology 101 terms, it's known as operant conditioning, and in real-life terms it's known as "Do something good and you'll get a treat." Start with puppies as soon as they can

see and hear. When your dog does whatever you're telling it to do—sit still, stop gnawing on the couch, fetch you a beer—you use a small metal clicker (about \$4 at your local pet store) to make a noise, then immediately give the fur ball a snack. The Beggin' Strips make Fido happy, he associates the click with his happiness, and soon enough the click itself becomes the reward.

How effective is clicker training? There are captive hyenas that will sit still while having blood drawn from their jugular, just for the sweet, sweet high of a click. And we've spent 15,000 years breeding dogs to be trainable—which can't be said for hyenas.