

Inside dog v Outside dog

There are many reasons to have an inside dog but if you're having trouble deciding, consider the following:

Dogs are social animals

In order to meet your dog's social needs, they should be allowed to spend time inside with you. Even if it is only for an hour each night while you watch TV. Alternatively, if you decide to not allow your dog inside the house, you should be prepared to spend as much time as possible outside interacting with your dog all year around (including the colder months).

I want my dog to be a watch dog so they should stay outside

Your valuables are inside with you! If you answer your door with your dog it is a much better deterrent. If your dog is outside there is much more opportunity to get out, be stolen or as horrible as the thought is, baited or poisoned.

My children have developed allergies to the dog's hair

If you are concerned about allergies, or your children are prone to allergies, hopefully you have done your research and bought a breed of dog which doesn't shed hair and is suitable for people with allergies.

If you have been surprised with development of allergies in your family due to your dog, consider restricting the area of the house the dog is allowed in by using baby gates and crates and regular brushing and grooming of your dog.



Inside dogs exhibit fewer problem behaviours. For example:

Uncontrollable and excited greetings when people come outside:

If the only time your dog sees you is when you come outside, then they will be very excited and often lose their inability to be appropriate. Your dog needs to learn to be calm around people and most of the time people go outside to play and run around with the dog, so they will not be able to learn calm then.

Barking:

There is lots of stimulation in the outside world for dogs. People and dogs walking past the front gate, postmen, delivery trucks, other dogs barking, wildlife at night time to name some. Having your dog inside can prevent access to this stimulus (visually, audibly or both) and in turn reduce excessive barking and possible fence running. Having your dog inside at certain times will prevent the dog from practicing these unwanted behaviours on a daily basis.

Destructive behaviours:

Some dogs cope better with being left outside alone in the yard than others. Signs of your dog not coping include destructive behaviours such as digging, chewing items in the yard and at times result in attempts to escape. Allowing these dogs some time inside the house will reduce their separation distress. Measures do need to be put into place to teach the dogs that being outside alone is ok. (See our information sheets destructive behaviours, home alone and separation anxiety).

When I let my dog inside, he destroys everything and chews things he shouldn't.

You can't expect to bring your puppy or dog inside the house and expect them to behave perfectly. You wouldn't let a young child be unsupervised in an unknown house and let them wander where ever they liked!

Set your dog up for success and teach them what you expect of them when they come inside. Teach them to settle in an area of the house so they can still be a part of the daily activities, but not be too much in the way. If you have decided to bring your dog inside the house, start with short periods (seconds and minutes!) of calm in a crate or on a mat, and increase the time each day.

Remember, dog are opportunists, they don't deliberately chew things they shouldn't. Prevention is always better than a cure.

Refer to our info sheets on **crate training & mat training**.

You can also use baby gates to prevent access to bedrooms or certain living areas.



Attend training classes with your dog

Formal training classes will go a long way to help you teach your dog the manners to be allowed inside the house. Be sure to attend family friendly, positive reinforcement based training classes such as those offered by the RSPCA Qld.

You can teach your dog while they are inside

Your dog is learning from you every minute you are together. This gives the inside dog who shares your home a great advantage over an outside dog. The inside dog soon learns what leads to attention, car trips, walks and treats as well as what doesn't! Even without any formal training, the inside dog will probably learn to 'fit in' just as he would in the wild - through observation and experience. You too will learn to 'read' your dog more easily if you are able to spend time observing him in the comfort of your own home.

References and further reading

Larsen Bridge, Karen (2000) *Bring the dog in*, Get S.M.A.R.T dogs

Petcare Information and Advisory Service (2012) *Pets in the City*
<http://www.petsinthecity.net.au/our-changing-lifestyles>