

Researching A Prospective New Home for Your Dalmatian

1. Use Google satellite maps to investigate the address of the person. You will be able to get a feel for the home and yard. If you aren't comfortable with what you see, you should think hard before moving forward or at least incorporate questions into the interview that address your concern(s).
2. Arrange a time to talk when you both can focus on the "interview". Use your list of requirements and the questions listed below to learn more about the potential new owner.

Questions to ask:

- Have you ever had a Dal before? If the answer is "No", share the information found in the article ["Is A Dalmatian Right for You?"](#). Let potential homes know what the breed is like.
- Have you ever had a dog before? If "Yes", what happened to that dog? If the dog was hit by a car, then you have the right to know how such an accident will be prevented in the future.
- Do you rent or share? If "Yes", will they provide a letter of permission from their landlord stating they can have 40-60 pound dogs? If they still live with parents, do the parents want a dog that large?
- Do you have children? If "Yes", how old? Take care in this area. Don't ask a dog who has never lived with children to live with children under eight years of age.
- Do you have any other pets? What kind? Are other dogs spayed or neutered?
- Do you have a fenced yard? If "No", how will they exercise the dog? Is fencing a possibility?
- Will the dog live in the house? Be allowed on furniture? Where will the dog sleep at night? Where will the dog stay while the owners are at work?
- Is there someone home during the day? If "No", how long will the dog be left alone?
- Does anyone in the family have allergies?
- Are you aware of the Dal's shedding?
- Who is your current veterinarian for you pets or your most recent one for previous vets? How often do your pets see the veterinarian? You should contact the veterinarian to confirm the person is a client.

There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to these questions. They are just a way to determine how the home will fit your dog. As you listen, some comments should raise doubts in your mind!

- "I don't really know anything about Dalmatians, but I want one." People who know nothing about the breed are setting themselves up for failure as dog owners.

- "I want a dog for the kids to teach them responsibility." Children cannot be expected to assume full responsibility for care of a pet. Many dogs are abandoned because "the kids refuse to take care of them".
- "My son/daughter wants to pick a dog for himself/herself." Children cannot listen to the pros and cons about a breed of dog and then make a logical decision as to whether the dog will fit into the household.
- "This will be a surprise for my parents/friend/nephew/grandchild." Pets should never be given as a surprise. People have to make their own decision about acquiring a pet.
- "We need this dog right away. We don't have time for all these silly questions." Why? What's the hurry?
- "The kids watch the movie all the time and the house is all decorated in Dalmatian stuff." A living breathing dog is not a decoration, in fact, he may destroy the decorations.
- "I just talked my mother/roommate/landlord into letting me get a dog." Everyone involved has to really want a dog.
- "We don't have a fence." If the caller doesn't have a fence, how will he handle the exercise needs of a large, very active dog?
- "Let's hope this dog works out." How many other dogs have they had and why didn't they work?
- "Why can't this dog be bred?" or "Why does it have to be spayed or neutered?" or "I'm looking for a mate for my dog." Irresponsible breeding is the reason there are so many homeless dogs. You do not want your dog to contribute to the problem.

The person may still turn out to be a good home. Just keep digging until you have more information. Remember that some people may be good hearted and have the best intentions, but they may not be the right home for YOUR dog. Feel free to talk to us or your local rescue organization about any answers which make you feel uneasy. We'll be glad to help you to evaluate your prospective homes.

3. If the person passes the "interview", invite him or her and their housemates to visit you and meet your dog. It may be a good idea to meet at a neutral location such as a park particularly if they will be bringing a dog of their own. This way you can get a better feel for the situation before you invite them to see the dog at your house. Make sure the whole family comes to visit. If there are children, you need to see what they are like. Rowdy or undisciplined children make a transition to a new home hard on a dog. In addition, the children may be obviously overwhelmed by your dog. In either case, this may NOT be the right home for your dog.
4. If all seems well, the next step is to take the dog to their home for a visit. This is a very important part of the placement process, and it should not be missed. It will give you a chance to check out the home atmosphere, physical layouts, and your dog's response to where he would live. Make it clear in a nice way that this may only be a visit. You may

make the decision on site to either leave the dog, arrange for another visit, or pursue other homes.

5. **FOLLOW UP:** During the first week, check on your dog's progress in his new home at least twice. Find out if any problems have developed. Continue to check about once a week during the first month. If you can, assure the new family that you will be available to answer any questions they may have about your former pet and his transition to their home. Placement of a dog is not an easy procedure. Your goal is to find the RIGHT home for your dog...one where he will stay and be loved.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Saying "NO": You have the right to say "NO" to the adoption at any point for any reason. You don't have to offer an explanation; just tell the prospective home that circumstances have changed. Chances are likely that if you're not comfortable with the choice of a new home, your dog won't be either. Remember, he/she is depending on you to find just the right home.

(Prepared by the DCA/DCAF Rescue Education Committee)