

Rehoming Your Shar Pei

There are several questions that you will need to ask yourself when deciding whether or not to give up your dog. The first and most important is do you really have to give him/her up? There is a big difference between being forced to give up your Shar Pei and voluntarily giving him/her up. This is the time to do some honest soul searching as to the reasoning behind your decision to rehome your dog. Try to imagine how your dog is going to adjust. Would you consider re-homing a child? Not likely! Is there something you could do to change the situation that would enable you to keep your pet? Would someone else be able to live with your pet in its current state?

Please remember that shelters and humane societies were never created to be a drop off for unwanted pets. Chances are that if a shelter was to accept your pet there is a good chance it will never find a good home and will eventually be put down only after it has experienced the worst time of its life.

Step 1. Call your dog's breeder:

Before you do anything else it is important that you check with the person you bought the dog from. You may have signed an agreement that states you cannot dispose of the animal without consent. This may also be true if you got the dog from a shelter or rescue service. If you don't know who the breeder is there are a couple to things you can do to try and find out, check the registration papers if you have them or if the animal is micro chipped, contact the CKC/AKC with the number and they should be able to help you out. Most reputable breeders will take a dog back or help you rehome the dog.

Step 2. Evaluate your dog's adoption potential:

Now is the time to be honest with yourself and what is it that you cannot live with in regards to this animal? Will someone else be able to live with it or are you trying to give your problem to someone else. Most people don't want used goods especially a poorly behaved or ill dog. What kind of impression would s/he make when first meeting a potentially new owner? Would you want to adopt him?

Make up a list of positive things about your dog, good with kids, house trained, gets along with other dogs. Now make up a list of not so positive things, not good with cats, dislikes strangers, any health concerns, limited vision.

Step 3. Getting your dog ready:

It is important that your dog look his/her best for a potential new owner. Making sure the animal is bathed, nails and ears done and up-to-date vaccinations also need to be looked after. If your animal has not been spayed or neutered now is the time to do it. By spaying or neutering your animal you will help to ensure that they will not end up in a puppy mill or with a dog broker. No one wants this to happen to their family pet.

Step 4. Advertise:

Running a classified ad is the best way to reach the largest number of people, done properly this is very effective. The first thing you should decide is the amount of the adoption fee. Don't advertise that your dog is free. It has been proven that when things are given away they are not appreciated or looked after as well as something that has been earned or paid for. The adoption fee also needs to be within a reasonable range, \$150.00 - \$200.00, should be enough to offset your advertising and veterinary costs, remember you are adopting out "used goods" you can't expect to get as much as a new puppy would cost. Your goal should be to get the best home possible not make money on this deal. If possible don't include a dollar amount in your ad simply say "adoption fee required".

The description should include: breed (Chinese Shar Pei), sex, color, age (under 2 list the age in months, older than 3 list as young adult). Go back to your list of positive points and emphasize his good points, house broken, well mannered, loves kids etc. Now is the time to emphasize his good points but don't exaggerate either, just because the dog knows his name does not make him well trained. Include what your requirements are for his new home, fenced yard, no cats, kids over 10 years of age. This is where you may want to list some of those not so positive things from your list. Try to say these things in a positive way so not to turn people off, "should be only pet" sounds better than "doesn't like other animals", or "dog aggressive". Another thing you may want to include in your ad that references are required, this tells people that you're being selective and potential puppy millers or dog brokers won't bother to enquire.

Your ad may read something like this: Chinese Shar-Pei, this beautiful red young adult neutered male is looking for loving family with fenced yard, best with children over 10, references and adoption fee required. Call Susan after 6 p.m. 555-1234 e-mail: sus@earthlink.net

Along with advertising in your local paper, look at advertising in papers that are 1 – 2 hours drive from your home. Sunday papers draw the most readers. Nearly all communities have a small budget newspaper that comes out 1-2 times a month. Don't get discouraged it may take up to a month or more to connect with the right person most people give up too soon. Be selective, remember you need to find the best possible home for your dog.

Newspapers are just one way to advertise. Now that you have your ad take a cute photo of your dog and have copies made. Duplicating photo ad's can cost as little as a quarter each, since you are not paying for words you can add additional information to your flyer ad. Your vet clinic is a good place to start with distributing the flyer, grocery stores, pet supply stores, grooming shops, factories, malls. You could even mail some to a friend to distribute in a neighboring community for you.

Step 5 Interviewing callers:

It is very important that you choose the right person and this may not be an easy task, "first come, first served" is not what you are after here. One of the best references you can get is the potential new owners' Veterinarian, if they have or had one in the past. Now is the time to go back to your list of good and bad points and make sure there is not a conflict with what the new owners are looking for or have to offer.

Do they have other pets?

Are their current pets spayed/neutered?

Do they have a fenced yard?

**Where will the dog spend most of its time?
Why are they interested in a Shar Pei?**

References, make sure to use them.

Step 6 The "in person" interview:

If possible try to set up two interviews, one at your home and one at theirs. If this is not possible, have a reliable friend do a home visit for your. If neither of these options is possible, ask for pictures of their home and where the dog will be living. Make sure if the dog will be living in a household with children you are able to observe the dog's reaction, as well as the children's, when they are introduced.

Do you like these people? Are you comfortable having them in your home? Will they make a good pet owner? Trust your instincts, if something about them doesn't seem quite right, even if you can't identify it, don't take a chance, wait for another family.

Step 7 Preparing for the new family:

Set aside a special time that everyone that is involved with the dog can say their goodbyes. You know you will cry so you might as well do it in private so you hopefully can work with a clear head when the new family arrives to pick him up. Make sure to have all the paperwork ready as well as the dog. Make sure the new family is aware that there is going to be an adjustment period. It could take a few weeks before the dog settles in to their new home.

Your dogs medical records, vets name and phone number.

Your dogs toys, bed, blanket and any special belongings. A supply of dog food and treats s/he loves.

An instruction sheet on feeding, and any special needs.

Collar and leash, an Adoption Contract, this will help protect the dog as well as you.

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