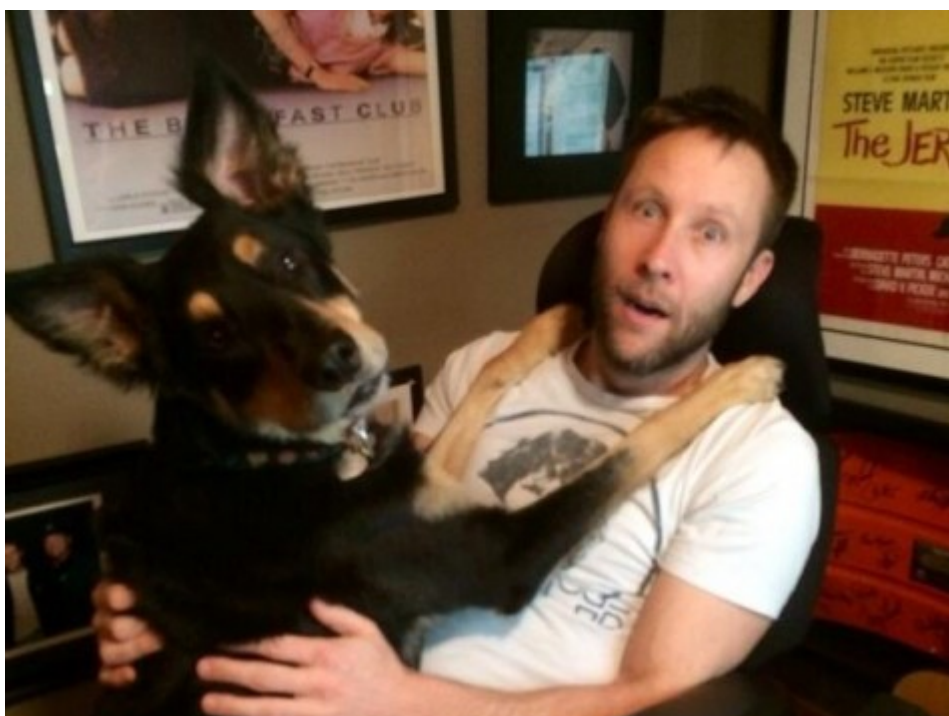


Dating with Dogs: What to Discuss Before Getting a Pet



By Eric Bittman,

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So you've been dating your significant other for a while. It feels like true love, and you decide to take the next step: buying or adopting a cute puppy together. Before you pick up your fluffy Fido, there are a few conversations that you need to have.

Related Link: [Picking Out a Pet Together](#)

While two people may seem like a perfect couple, their ideas on dog training may be totally opposite. One person might think crate-training is the way to go, while their other half might cringe at the idea of keeping their pup in a cage during the workday. Your mate might think a dog should eat Purina

puppy chow and nothing else, while you might want Spot to eat only home-cooked, human-quality meals. The list goes on and on.

Before you bring home your new dog, it's crucial to sit down and talk about these sort of things with your partner. This will save you the stress of screaming at each other while little Rufus is happily chewing your shoes. Think about the dog's feeding plan, walking schedule, sleeping arrangements, and exercise routine, and think about your own disciplinary techniques. If the conversation becomes hostile with no compromise in sight, it might be better to wait a bit – for the sake of your relationship and that sweet dog.

Note that there's not always a "right" way to train your pet, but taking your dog to a local professional may help shape your decisions. Once the issues are settled, enjoy every minute with your new friend. Raising a puppy will definitely bring you and your partner closer.

Related Link: [When Your Pet is a Deal Breaker](#)

This month, I asked actor Michael Rosenbaum, who recently wrote, directed, and starred in the movie *Back In the Day*, a few questions about dating with dogs:

Q: What is your favorite dog breed?

A: German Shepherd. My grandmother always had Shepherds running around the house while I was growing up.

Q: How many dogs have you owned?

A: My family had a St. Bernard, some poodles and a Golden Retriever growing up, but the first dog that I've ever owned is Irv, a German Shepherd.

Q: If you dated someone who demanded a little dog, such as a chihuahua or a yorkie, would you give in or push for a bigger dog?

A: I like more of a manly dog. Someone I can wrestle with and not have worry about stepping on by accident.

Q: You meet someone that insists that her dog sleeps in the bed with you guys. Is that the end of the relationship?

A: Irv sleeps with me every night. Maybe this question should be for the person I'm dating!

Q: What is your favorite brand of dog shampoo? (Hint: I will only accept one answer to this question!)

A: I like Warren London. It's all-natural, and that has to be good, right?

For more information about Eric Bittman, click [here](#). Stay tuned for next month's Dating with Dogs column!