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Top Ten Dogs for Fitness Buffs

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By Yahaira Cespedes

Are you looking for a canine companion that matches your active spirit? If the activity of running is part of your fitness regimen, you might want to consider getting a canine exercise companion that will help you keep your stride.

Whether you are training for a marathon, or you like to take it easy with "fun runs," there is a wide array of dogs that are ideal for your preferred type of activity. Choosing which dogs are best suited to accompany (and push) you while you're on the go depends on what "on the go" means to you.

If you gravitate towards challenging outdoor activities, it is important to note that dogs with long snouts usually make better outdoor exercise companions. It's just easier for canines that have this physical characteristic to breath deeply and evenly.

Joggers and long-distance runners, for example, might prefer a dog known for its endurance. If you live in a predominantly cold climate, you might seek out a cold-resistant, hardy breed. Whatever your active, healthy lifestyle may be, there's a dog perfectly suited to be your exercise buddy.

While we don't endorse one animal breed over the other, petMD recommends the following top breeds to suit an active lifestyle, judged by their strengths and weaknesses:

The Fast and the Furious

[Runner's World](#) magazine compiled a chart of canines based on breed, physical strengths, and key traits. If you are looking for a sprinter's challenge, there are several breeds to choose from, including:

[Whippets](#) are known for their bursts of speed and abundance of energy; they love to dash and race. These traits make these canines a favorite among hunters and those training for speed fitness.

[Greyhounds](#) aren't racing dogs for nothing. Their slender bodies and lean legs make these dogs a natural choice to include in this selection. Their calm demeanor and gentle disposition also make them an ideal family pet.

Cool as a Cucumber

If you live in a colder climate and enjoy romping in the snow, you will want to look for a dog whose stocky body and longer coat protect them from colder temperatures.

You can't think of dogs running in cold climates without thinking about them playing in the snow. The most popular breeds that thrive in cooler climates are [Alaskan Malamutes](#) and [Siberian Huskies](#).

Hot Pursuit

Staying in shape by exercising outdoors in hot weather can be fun and rewarding, but you might prefer a dog that can take the heat. It is important to note that whether or not a dog is a breed that can withstand higher temperatures, [dehydration](#) is still something to watch out for.

[Vizlas](#) are light on their feet and they don't mind hotter temperatures. They are also one of the more active breeds that require a lot of exercise activity.

Also known as the African Lion Dog, [Rhodesian Ridgebacks](#) were originally bred to hunt lions. Their shiny coat and stamina make this breed ideally suited for hot temperatures.

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Going the Distance

Some fitness buffs enjoy the journey more, and like their exercise regimen to take time. A dog will help keep you company on longer sojourns, especially if you select one of these breeds who are well-known for their endurance and patience:

[Standard Poodles](#) love to hike and swim, and are well adapted to exercise at a slow and steady pace.

[Labrador Retrievers](#) are another ideal dog for those who like to exercise at a long and leisurely pace. Like most Labradors, Retrievers love water and also enjoy hikes.

Keep an Eye On The Ball

What if your exercise varies from day to day, or if you live near a heavily peopled park? Then you'll want to look into a highly intelligent, playful, yet obedient dog breed like a [German Wirehaired Pointer](#).

Last, but certainly not least, is the [Curly-Coated Retriever](#), whose athletic physical traits combined with a gentle and patient disposition (especially around children) make this an ideal companion to take along with you for outdoor adventures.

Whatever way you like to keep in shape, take a four-legged friend along and watch how your workout time will fly by!

Image: [David Merrett](#) / via Flickr