

## PICTURE TAKING TIPS

It cannot be stressed enough...a picture is worth a thousand words when it comes to web exposure.

The picture is the first thing people see when they visit your page. If the dog has a poor picture, visitors may move on to another dog without reading your dog's description. If you want to give your dog the best chance possible, take large, clear, good quality pictures of the dog alone (people should be cropped from the picture). A good picture is often the difference between a dog who generates inquiries and one who doesn't.

- Use treats and/or a squeaky toy to capture the dog's best expression. Teach the dog to sit and stay before the picture session so he remains in place while you take pictures.
- Get down to the dog's level.
- Try taking pictures using a variety of backdrops. Select backgrounds that compliment the dog's coloring. Darker-colored dogs will show up better against a lighter backdrop.
- Avoid taking pictures of dogs through fencing. Get in the kennel with the dog or, better yet, take the dog out of the kennel unless you want to show the sad situation the dog is currently in..
- Pictures taken outside generally come out better than indoor pictures where the flash usually goes off. Flash-eye is difficult to correct. Lighting is very important for accurately capturing a dog's coloring and detail. Have the sun or light source behind you and check to make sure you're not casting a shadow on your subject and also that your subject isn't casting any strange shadows.
- Try different props. If the dog likes to fetch, you might get a picture of the dog with her favorite ball. Wrap a bandana around the dog's neck to add a streak of color (especially good for solid and darker-colored dogs). A bright, cheerful collar is a nice touch. Avoid having chain and prong collars in your pictures.
- The dog is the subject of your picture so the dog should take up the majority of space in your picture. Avoid excessive amounts of background. The dog's eyes should be focused on you. Pictures of the dog blinking or looking away should be redone.
- Exercise the dog before your photo shoot. A calmer dog is easier to photograph, and a panting dog looks like she's smiling!

Take a lot of pictures. You may have to take 50 pictures to get 1 or 2 really great shots. Digital cameras are excellent to use. If you don't have one, you might borrow one from a friend.