

Can my Dog be a Service Dog?

So many of us want our dogs to be with us all the time. After all, it gives us something to focus on and can help many of us with uncomfortable moments or the inability to connect successfully with people face-to-face. But, if we truly love our dogs and want what's best for them, we have to be realistic about what they like and don't like, what they can and can't handle, and what they want and don't want to do.

Dogs that can be Service Dogs...

🦴 **Dogs that are able to IGNORE EVERYTHING in the environment**

This means, they can ignore the dog walking past, the little kid with chocolate covered fingers who wants to pet them or the smell of beef brisket on a BBQ

🦴 **Dogs that are comfortable enough in their own skin, that the unpredictable nature of HUMANS DOESN'T FREAK THEM OUT**

This means that they aren't anxious when walking through a crowd, even a drunken crowd, even at 2am, exploring an area they've never been or dealing with an aggressive dog or human.

🦴 **Dogs that can put their HUMAN FIRST – no matter what**

Let's face it, some dogs don't want to work or focus on something 24/7. They're couch potatoes, bred for short term or different work or just don't care enough. Service Dogs have to put their humans first, once a Cue of 'Leave it' is given, a trained Service Dog doesn't need to be told again.

🦴 **Dogs that have GREAT IMPULSE CONTROL and manners**

Service Dogs cannot react to the environment....unless that reaction is part of their work - like blocking or grounding their human. Their entire job is focused on their human, and being calm for them, they take in just enough of the environment to be aware of what's going and how it may affect their person.

This list is by no means comprehensive, but it is a start as to why less than 50% of dogs bred to be Service Dog's even graduate with the title. Not all dogs can be Service Dog's, actually as a trainer I spend a great deal of time finding the right candidates before putting in any of the work. Do your dog a favor, and don't sign them up for a job they don't want or won't be good at.