

# Family Protection Dog Readiness Scorecard

## Is a Fully Trained Protection Dog the Right Decision for Your Family?

A trained protection dog can become one of the strongest security investments your family ever makes, but it is not the right decision for every home, budget, or lifestyle. Use this scorecard to evaluate whether your family is ready for a fully trained Fortress K9 Protection Dog, whether you should start with a Family Protection Plan, whether you need more education first, or whether this may not be the right decision yet.

A protection dog is too serious to choose based only on emotion, fear, price, breed, or a video. The goal is not to get the highest score. The goal is to find the right next step.

### How to Score Yourself

For each section, rate your family from **1 to 5**.

**1 = Not ready**

**2 = Needs significant work**

**3 = Somewhat ready**

**4 = Mostly ready**

**5 = Ready now**

Add your score at the end and compare it to the results guide.

### 1. Security Concern

**Question:** Do we have a real security concern that a trained protection dog could help address?

**1 =** We are mostly curious about protection dogs.

**2 =** We have general concerns, but no clear problem.

**3 =** We are concerned about safety, but need more clarity.

**4 =** We have a clear concern: home safety, travel, property, business exposure, or family vulnerability.

**5 =** We have a serious and specific security concern, and passive systems alone may not be enough.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Budget Readiness

**Question:** Are we financially prepared for a fully trained protection dog?

Fortress K9 trained protection dogs typically range from **\$30,000 to \$75,000+**, depending on the dog, training level, timeline, and fit.

**1** = This investment is not realistic for us right now.

**2** = We want a protection dog, but the current budget does not support a fully trained dog.

**3** = We may be able to invest, but need more time, planning, or a payment structure.

**4** = We understand the investment and can likely move forward if the dog, timeline, and payment structure fit.

**5** = We are financially prepared to move forward if the right dog is available.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **3. Household Stability**

**Question:** Is our household structured enough for a powerful working dog?

**1** = Our home is chaotic, inconsistent, or not ready for a trained working dog.

**2** = We want the dog, but our routines, expectations, or boundaries are unclear.

**3** = We have some structure, but need help creating clear rules and routines.

**4** = Our home has enough structure to support a trained dog with proper guidance.

**5** = Our home is stable, structured, and ready to maintain clear expectations.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **4. Children and Family Safety**

**Question:** Do we understand that the dog must be safe with our family before it can be trusted to protect our family?

**1** = We are focused mostly on protection capability and have not thought much about daily safety.

**2** = We want a strong dog, but do not know how safety with children and family should be evaluated.

**3** = We understand safety matters, but still need help knowing what to look for.

**4** = We understand that a true family protection dog must be stable around the people it protects.

**5** = We fully understand that family safety comes first.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key standard:** If a dog is not safe around your children, it is not a protection dog.

### **5. Other Animals and Pet Management**

**Question:** Are we prepared to manage the dog responsibly around other animals?

- 1 = We expect the dog to automatically fit with all animals without management.
- 2 = We have other animals, but have not thought through introductions, boundaries, or structure.
- 3 = We understand other animals matter, but need help planning the integration.
- 4 = We are prepared to follow guidance and manage introductions correctly.
- 5 = We understand that the right dog, proper structure, and careful integration all matter.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Daily Life Readiness

**Question:** Are we ready for the normal daily life of owning this dog, not just the protection side?

- 1 = We are mostly focused on the idea of a protection dog, not the daily reality.
- 2 = We want the dog, but have not thought through routines, handling, travel, guests, or public behavior.
- 3 = We understand there is daily responsibility, but need more guidance.
- 4 = We are prepared to integrate the dog into our real life with proper instruction.
- 5 = We understand that 99% of life with the dog will not be bite work, and we are ready to live with, manage, and maintain the dog every day.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Handler Responsibility

**Question:** Are we willing to maintain obedience, structure, and leadership after the dog comes home?

- 1 = We want the dog to solve the problem without requiring much from us.
- 2 = We know handling matters, but are not sure we are ready for the responsibility.
- 3 = We are willing, but need clear instruction and support.
- 4 = We understand that maintaining obedience and structure is part of owning the dog.
- 5 = We are ready to take Family Integration Training seriously and maintain the dog's training with consistency.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 8. Real-World Protection Expectations

**Question:** Do we understand the difference between real-world protection and sport-style bite work?

- 1 = We mostly judge protection dogs by how impressive the bite videos look.
- 2 = We know bite work matters, but are not clear on what makes a dog prepared for real violence.

**3** = We understand there is a difference, but need more education.

**4** = We understand that real protection requires more than a dog biting on command.

**5** = We understand that a real protection dog must respond to aggression, counter pressure, and protect the handler or family when the threat does not follow a routine.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key distinction:** A sport dog and a real protection dog can both bite well, the same way a competition shooter and a special operations soldier can both shoot well. The mission is different.

## 9. Training Philosophy Alignment

**Question:** Do we believe in a dog trained for The Switch?

**1** = We mainly want a dog that looks intimidating or aggressive.

**2** = We like the idea of protection, but are unsure about controlled aggression and responsibility.

**3** = We are interested in The Switch, but need more education on how the dog turns on and off.

**4** = We understand the dog must be calm in normal life and capable when the threat is real.

**5** = We fully value The Switch: calm in daily life, controlled under threat, and stable again when the threat is over.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Decision Readiness

**Question:** If the right dog, timeline, and fit were available, would we be ready to move forward?

**1** = We are only researching and are not close to making a decision.

**2** = We are interested, but budget, timing, or family agreement is not in place.

**3** = We may be ready later, but need more clarity before making a commitment.

**4** = We are close to ready and need to confirm fit, timeline, and next steps.

**5** = We are prepared to schedule a consultation and discuss whether a Fortress K9 Protection Dog is the right fit.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Add Your Score

Security Concern: \_\_\_\_\_

Budget Readiness: \_\_\_\_\_

Household Stability: \_\_\_\_\_

Children and Family Safety: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Animals and Pet Management: \_\_\_\_\_

Daily Life Readiness: \_\_\_\_\_  
Handler Responsibility: \_\_\_\_\_  
Real-World Protection Expectations: \_\_\_\_\_  
Training Philosophy Alignment: \_\_\_\_\_  
Decision Readiness: \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_ / 50**

Your score is a guide, not a final verdict. If you are close to the next range, read both recommendations and choose the path that best matches your family's situation, budget, timeline, and responsibility level.

## **Your Result**

### **41–50: Ready for a Consultation**

You appear to understand the investment, responsibility, and need for a trained protection dog. You likely have a clear security concern, a serious reason for moving forward, and enough readiness to discuss whether a Fortress K9 Protection Dog is the right fit.

**If you are near the top of this range:** You may be ready to schedule a consultation now.

**If you are near the bottom of this range:** Review the Buyer's Checklist or discuss your household, timeline, and expectations before committing.

**Recommended next step: Schedule a Consultation.**

### **31–40: Start With the Family Protection Plan**

You are serious about family security, but you may need a clearer plan before choosing a dog. This range often means you understand the need, but still need help clarifying your home layout, routines, security gaps, household roles, and best path forward.

**If you are near the top of this range:** You may be close to consultation-ready, but a Family Protection Plan can confirm priorities before choosing a dog.

**If you are near the bottom of this range:** Avoid rushing into a dog purchase until the plan is clearer.

**Recommended next step: Start with the Family Protection Plan.**

### **21–30: Read *Beyond the Bite* First**

You are interested in protection dogs, but may need more education before moving forward. This range often means you are still learning the difference between a family protection dog, a sport-trained dog, a pet with bite training, and a true real-world protection dog.

**If you are near the top of this range:** You may be moving toward the Family Protection Plan, but should strengthen your understanding first.

**If you are near the bottom of this range:** You may be too early in the decision process to compare dogs or trainers.

**Recommended next step: Read *Beyond the Bite*.**

### **11–20: Start With a Puppy / K9 Academy / In-Person Training Path**

You may not be ready for a fully trained Fortress K9 Protection Dog yet. That does not mean you have no path forward. It may mean you have more time than budget, or that your family would be better served by starting with a puppy, obedience foundation, K9 Academy, or in-person training.

**If you are near the top of this range:** You may be able to work toward a future protection dog with the right education and planning.

**If you are near the bottom of this range:** Focus on basic structure, obedience, education, and realistic expectations before considering a fully trained protection dog.

**Recommended next step: Start with the Puppy / K9 Academy / In-Person Training path.**

### **10 or Below: Not Ready Yet**

A protection dog may not be the right decision at this time. That does not mean never. It means your budget, household structure, expectations, timeline, or level of responsibility may need to change before this decision makes sense.

The wrong protection dog in the wrong home can create more risk than protection. It is better to wait, learn, and prepare than to force a decision your family is not ready for.

**Recommended next step: Keep learning and revisit this scorecard later.**

### **Final Thought**

A protection dog is not for everyone. But for the right family, with the right dog, the right training, and the right support, it can become one of the most important security decisions they ever make.

The right dog is not just powerful. The right dog is stable in normal life, controlled under pressure, capable when violence becomes real, and safe with the people it is meant to protect.

Choose carefully. Your family is worth that level of seriousness.

