

Are You Ready To Adopt?

Adopting an animal means signing on for a lifetime of responsibility. Are you prepared? The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals recommend you ask yourself the following questions before adopting a pet.

Am I ready to make a long-term commitment?

Adopting an animal means being responsible for its health and happiness. That responsibility should take the relationship through normal life changes, including moving. Cats can live up to 20 years, and dogs can live 15 years or more.

Can I afford an animal?

The cost of an animal includes more than the adoption fee. Remember to figure in the cost of food, basic and emergency veterinary care and general supplies such as kitty litter, bowls, leashes, collars and toys.

Is everyone in my household in favor of adopting an animal?

One adult in the home should be designated as the primary caretaker to avoid the animals needs being lost in the shuffle of busy schedules. Also, make sure your landlord allows pets prior to bringing any new animal home.

Do I have at least one hour a day to devote to loving and caring for the animal?

You may need to allot even more time for a dog than for a cat since dogs are more social animals, but both thrive on companionship.

Am I ready to assume the daily responsibilities of caring for the animal?

All animals need daily care, such as cleaning a cat's litter box and picking up after a dog when he "does his duty." They also need to be fed and exercised through play. In addition, most need regular brushing or grooming.

Am I willing to learn basic cat or dog behavior training?

Dogs are eager to please, but you still need to work with them to teach even the basics of doggie etiquette: Sit, Stay, Come and Down. Cats are more independent, but understanding their behavior will help you train them to use the litter box and not to scratch the furniture.

If you honestly answered "yes" to all of these questions, you are probably ready to adopt. If you have reservations, consider waiting until you, your circumstances, or both change. You will save the animal from being returned to the shelter.



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