



Are You Ready to Adopt an Animal Companion?

Bringing an animal into your home is a big commitment - millions of animals are surrendered to shelters each year by people who did not understand that commitment before getting an animal. Here are some questions to ask yourself to determine if you are prepared to bring an animal companion into your home.

ARE YOU READY?

- 1) Have you given the idea plenty of thought? Obtaining an animal because it seems like a fun thing to do, or because the kids want a puppy, often ends in heartbreak.
- 2) Do you have the time for an animal? Dogs and cats are social animals who need and want your time and attention. They also need food, water, grooming, and exercise. Many animals are surrendered to shelters because their guardians did not realize how much time it took to care for them.
- 3) Can you afford an animal? Food, veterinary care, litter, training and toys can add up quickly
- 4) Are you willing to work with any problems that may arise? Unexpected veterinary emergencies, behavior issues, and flea issues are just some of the problems an animal guardian may face.
- 5) Are your living arrangements suitable for the animal you choose? Are animals allowed in your rental home or apartment? Does your yard have a fence that will keep a dog from running loose?
- 6) What will you do if you move? One of the most common reason animals are surrendered to shelters is because people move and don't take their animals with them.
- 7) Do all members of the family want to bring an animal into the family? The decision to adopt should be made by the whole family. If one member does not want a dog or cat, it could lead to problems later on.
- 8) Can you be a responsible guardian? Having your animal spayed and neutered, keeping him or her safely confined and wearing identification at all times, and socialization and training are all a part of being responsible.
- 9) Are you ready to care for your animal for his or her entire life? When you adopt an animal, you are making a commitment to that animal for his or her entire-life - and that can be 10 to 20 years!

RESOURCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION ON BEING READY FOR ADOPTION

www.hsus.org: Click on "Pets", then "Pet Adoption Information"

www.pets911.com: Click on "Adopt a Pet", then "Important things to think about"

Everyone can help end America's homeless animal tragedy