

# What Do I Need to Know to Adopt?

There is no better feeling than entering the shelter and falling in love with your new best friend. Bringing a new pet into your home is always a big decision and one that should never be taken lightly. There are many things to consider when adding a pet to your home. Our staff and volunteers are here to assist you with any questions about the many wonderful animals that we have available for adoption. Before you come to the shelter to adopt a new pet, here are a few things to consider.

1. Is this the right time for you or your family to bring a new pet into your lives?
  - If you have a lot of responsibilities that take up large portions of your time it may not be the ideal time to bring a new pet home. Pets need time to adjust to their new life and family and if you don't have enough time to spend with Fido or Fluffy, it might not be a good fit for everyone.
2. Do I know what kind of pet is the right fit for me or my family?
  - Understanding your lifestyle will help to determine what type of pet would be best suited for you or your family.
  - Researching different breeds is important when deciding on whether a Chihuahua or a German Shepherd best fits your lifestyle.
3. Can you afford a pet at this time?
  - Owning a pet requires more than just providing love and food. There are wellness check-ups and preventative vaccinations; grooming; toys; leashes; collars; identification tags; licenses; and litter and litter box supplies that can add onto the basic expense of owning a pet. The average cost for a pet for the first year is about \$500. This does not necessarily include other items such as training, crates/carriers, bedding, boarding fees or treats.
4. If you rent or lease, does the agreement allow for pets in the residence?
  - Many residences don't allow pets or have restrictions as to the type of pets allowed.
  - If you are forced to relocate, will you be able to find new housing that will allow your pet as well? Remember, the average life-span for many pets can be as high as 15 years.
5. Am I prepared to handle difficult situations?
  - Accidents in the house?
  - Soiled or torn furniture?
  - Unexpected medical emergencies?
6. Am I patient enough to give a new pet time to adjust to me or my family?
  - Many times new pets need several weeks to become accustomed to their new life. A pet in the shelter may act quite differently when first brought home and needs time to get to know you or your family. They might be scared or confused but just need time to relax and realize that they are now safe and in a loving home.

These are a lot of things to consider when deciding to adopt a new pet, but we want to make sure that every pet has the opportunity to find the right home where they can live out their lives safe, happy and healthy. Please visit any of our shelters and speak with our staff or volunteers to assist you in the adoption process.