



Ten Tips on Selecting a Pet for Your Family

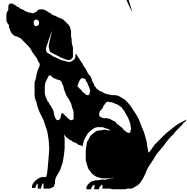


1. When considering a pet always research the characteristics and needs of that particular species or breed of animal. Impulsive choices can make for years of regret or the sorrow of a lost pet.

2. Looks and behaviors are selected for and bred into animals for a reason. Herding dogs will have a tendency to chase and nip; terriers are inherently aggressive as hunters and will often show that same tendency toward people. Some breeds of dogs are instinctively better with children, while some breeds will, by their size and instinctive nature, be a problem with children. In general, some breeds of cats are very quiet and good-natured; others are instinctively vocal and high-strung. A pot-bellied pig may be cute at six weeks, but may not make a good apartment pet at 250 pounds.



3. Certain animals are very adaptable and trainable, while others are not. No animal is born knowing what you want and how to live in your environment. It must be trained. The breed with the unique looks may not be the one best suited for your training expertise.



4. Visit a "puppy kindergarten" class or a local dog training facility. These experts on dog training can provide valuable insight on the different dog breeds and which may best fit your needs. Enrolling your dog and yourself in a training class can make all the difference between a well-mannered member of the family and a chronic headache.

5. Consider your environment when selecting a pet. Large dogs will need more room to exercise indoors and out. Dogs will require some form of containment outdoors, either a fence or leash. Cats can easily and willingly be kept indoors, eliminating the need for outdoor accommodations.

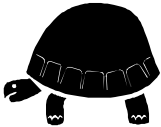


6. Consider your schedule and life style. Dogs require much more personal attention than does a cat, bird, fish, small pocket pet, or caged reptile. Dogs require frequent trips outdoors for exercise and elimination as opposed to other pets. If denied, these dogs can create significant problems in the home.

7. Think through carefully the maintenance cost and responsibilities assumed with pet ownership. Discuss these needs with all family members and consider the effects this new member of the household will have on everyone involved. A pet is not a disposable commodity; a pet is a lifelong obligation. Assume it wisely.



8. Visit your local humane organization or county animal control shelter, but remember that adult pets have already developed many good and bad habits that you may have to deal with. Often these pets are turned in because of lack of training and bad behavior. Often the pets are confiscated by officers while roaming freely. These behaviors are usually correctable if done with patience and the right techniques. These pets are, however, often the most in need of the right home. Seeking a pet at these shelters is not only commendable, but is encouraged.



9. Your veterinarian is the ideal source of information and recommendations for appropriate selection of a pet. Pet stores, breeders, and shelters are in business to place animals in homes and may be knowledgeable to help in your selection, however, a veterinarian is still a valuable resource in making your pet selection. Schedule an actual appointment to visit your local veterinarian and discuss your interest in a pet. It will be money very well spent.



10. Enjoy your pet, there is no better friend.



OHIO VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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