

ARTICLE

What to Ask Yourself Before ADOPTING A PET



Being owners of a professional pet care company, my business partner and I come across numerous people who need our help to find their pet a new home. Some of the reasons people are looking to give up their pets include: they are moving into a non-pet friendly building; they are having children; their children are allergic; they simply do not have the time; or particularly with puppies, they underestimated the work involved and they don't want to commit to anymore. While all of these are logical reasons for giving up a pet, the main goal should be to educate future pet owners BEFORE they bring a new pet into their home; therefore, the right decision will be made, and pets will not have to suffer with the stress and anxiety of changing homes.

The first question to ask yourself before you adopt a pet is: Why do you want a pet? Knowing why you are preparing to bring a pet home will help you determine the species and breed that will fit your lifestyle. It is easy to make a decision, based solely on emotions. Remember that puppies can be irresistible, but raising them properly takes a lot of time and hard work, while most adult dogs only require a bit of basic obedience training and a house-training refresher.

The second question you need to ask yourself is: Are you ready to make a long-term commitment? Certain pets can live for a long time, and you need to make a commitment to care for that pet for the rest of his/her life. For a dog, that could be 10 to 15 years, and for a cat that could mean up to 20 years.

Another issue when it comes to owning a pet is if you will have enough time to devote to your new friend. Dogs and other pets thrive on several hours of exercise and companionship every day, and some pets that are constantly left alone can develop behavioral problems. However, if you do work long hours, or travel often, if it still possible for you to be a responsible pet owner; you can hire a professional pet sitting company to help you out!

When you are ready to adopt, and you have thought through the tough questions posed above, you should first check out your local shelters and rescue organizations. Both are wonderful

resources to find your new companion. Saving a life is very rewarding, and your new pet will be very appreciative. One-quarter of all rescue dogs are purebred, and mixed breed dogs make wonderful pets too! An advantage to adopting an older pet is that they often have the social skills to be integrated into your family easily.

The staff at the shelters will spend some time with you to help you find the perfect fit for your needs.

Last but not least, one of the most important steps to take after adopting a shelter pet is to contact a reputable trainer, and a reliable and pet care company. Any pet—young or old, mixed breed or purebred—will likely need some training or retraining to learn how to fit into his new household and become your cherished companion. In addition, a professional pet care company is great to have on hand when you are planning to go on vacation or are just working long hours at your job. Make sure they have liability insurance, and that the insurance covers your pet while in their care!

Recommended places to adopt a pet on Staten Island:

- Pluto Rescue (<http://members.petfinder.com/~NY190/>)
- Animal Care and Control (3139 Veterans Road West)
- No More Tears Rescue (<http://www.nomoretearsrescue.com/>)
- Staten Island Council for Animal Welfare (<http://members.petfinder.com/~NY34/index.html>)
- Louie's Legacy (<http://www.louieslegacy.org/>)

If you have your heart set on a specific breed that you cannot locate at one of these places, you should check out a breed rescue organization online.

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