

# 5 TIPS FOR ADOPTING PETS

## LEARN WHAT BEING A PET OWNER MEANS BEFORE YOU ADOPT

---

### TIP #1

**First, the whole family has to agree to adopt, and then decide together which pet would be best.**

Big dogs, small dogs, furry cats, hairless cats.... So many options to choose from! Figuring out what you like (and why!) is super important before you go meet a bunch of adoptable cutie-pies. Some pets are better in apartments, some need big back yards. And some animals are better suited to life with kids than others. It's always best to focus on a pet's personality instead of on appearance; remember, you can't judge a book by its cover! Use the computer to help your family do research ahead of time, to find the best four-legged friend for your family and home!

### TIP #2

**Make sure the pet suits your way of life.**

Are you outside all the time or are you a couch potato? Would your family prefer an active animal who likes a lot of exercise or a cuddly, fluffy love bug? Does your family have room for a pet? Does your family have time to walk a dog three or more times a day? Does your family have the resources to take care of any health issues? Do you have time to train a dog, or would you prefer a cat that basically comes as is? These are questions to ask before you adopt, because each pet is so different!

Before the animal arrives, your family should decide, as a team, what the ground rules will be (no pups on the couch, no kitties on the kitchen counters, etc.). Then you can train the pet accordingly. It might take a while for them to learn all the rules, so be patient and stay on it!

### TIP #3

**Everyone in the family should learn how to care for the pet, and agree to take on some responsibilities.**

Make a schedule and divvy up the load. It can be fun learning to be responsible for your new pet, and the more time you spend with together, the more they'll love you for it!

For pups, you'll need to potty train and obedience train. Also nail clipping, hair brushing, occasional baths - these are a must! And puppy messes need to be cleaned up immediately and completely.

Before you try to convince your family to adopt a kitty, it's important to know how to clean a cat's litter box.

All animals need water! Make sure your pet has a clean bowl of fresh water, and keep it full throughout the day. If you have more than one pet make sure you have a bowl for each pet.

### TIP #4

**Exercise, feeding, playtime, and treats are a must!**

Some pets need more exercise than others. Choose based on your own abilities and desires.

Ask your vet the best plan for feeding your new friend, and add this to your family schedule. Don't forget!

It's fun to give treats to your pet, but only once in a while! Just like with humans, healthy whole foods are best. (Some pups even love carrots!) But never chocolate, coffee, grapes, raisins, spoiled food, or chicken bones (gross!). Make sure you ask your vet for the full list of foods you can't feed your pet - it depends on what kind of pet you have.

### TIP #5

**Stock up of supplies, food, and toys before you bring a pet home.**

Help welcome your new, four-legged family member with toys, water and food bowls, and maybe even a cozy blanket to call their own.

Most of all, be mindful, kind, and caring at all times, and in return, you'll get a loyal and loving new best friend!