



Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA

## So you are thinking about adopting a new pet . . .

. . . That is wonderful! Adopting an animal can be a rewarding, fulfilling experience. However, before you say “I do!” please take the time to consider these questions:

- **Do I have the financial resources?** Let’s face it – caring for pets costs money! In addition to essentials like food, bedding, grooming and toys, there may be veterinary bills, occasional boarding fees and other unforeseen expenses.
- **How will my other pets react?** Do you have an older, somewhat grumpy cat? If so, a frisky kitten may not be the best choice. If you are thinking about a companion for your resident dog, consider whether he enjoys the company of other dogs. Is he possessive of you, food, or toys when other dogs are around? This could pose a challenge if another dog enters your home. Bring your resident dog to the shelter so she can meet her new buddy before the adoption is final. For tips, please see our “Introductions” handouts.
- **Do I have children (or am I planning to)?** Not every animal gets along great with children. If there are kids in your life, adopt a pet that will do well with them. Alert your Adoptions Counselor if your new pet will be interacting with children; he or she can recommend appropriate matches. Generally, shy, skittish dogs and cats who play rough are not ideal for young children. Then again, many of our pets have lived with children before. Be sure to bring your children when looking for a new companion. Choosing a pet should be a family affair!
- **What is my living situation?** Do you own or are you renting? Do you see yourself living in the same place for a long time, or do you move often? It can often be difficult to predict where you’ll be in 10 years, but remember, the pet you adopt may live at least that long.
- **What is my lifestyle?** Are you active, or more of a couch potato? Do you travel often? Are you away from home many hours during the week? Answers to these questions should affect what animal you choose or how you accommodate that pet. If the dog you adopt is going to be home alone at least eight hours per day, you’ll need a relative, friend or dog-walker to spend time during the day with him. If you lead an active life, a high-energy younger dog or kitten might be the perfect match. If you prefer to be a homebody, a mature dog or cat who does not require a lot of exercise might be best. Think of the time and exercise that you can realistically provide, and then consider the animal’s needs.
- **Expect the Unexpected!** Every animal has his or her own quirks. After adopting a new pet, you may face challenges you never imagined. You’ll discover wonderful surprises, too.

We thank you for carefully considering this exciting process. Any time you spend thinking about these questions will be time well spent for you and your new companion.

**For more info, call our free Behavior Helpline (650/340-7022 x783 or, for Spanish, x786) or consider a low-cost consultation. To make a consultation appointment, call 650/340-7022 x667. The PHS/SPCA Behavior Department, like many shelter programs, is funded by donations.**