The Spot for All of Your Pet Care Needs

How to choose pets based on your lifestyle

Getting a pet can seem like a fabulous idea in the heat of the moment when puppy dog eyes are blinking back from behind the bars of a cage or when a cuddly hamster peeks out from his hiding spot and makes kids swoon. Even though pets can make wonderful companions, approximately 6.3 million pets enter United States shelters nationwide every year, according to the ASPCA. In addition, around 80,000 cats and dogs entered shelters in Canada in 2021, according to Humane Canada. Such figures suggest companion animals are not suitable to every animal lover's lifestyle.

Though many shelter pets find new homes, one of the ways to reduce the number of surrendered pets is to avoid impulse decisions. A careful consideration of lifestyle can ensure potential pet owners find an animal they're fully capable of caring for.

• Consider time constraints. People can be honest about their schedules and how pets can fit in. A busy executive who works 12-hour days and travels often may not be able to have a high-maintenance pet. Animals that do not require much interaction, such as aquarium fish or reptiles, may be better fits.

• Consider your interests. It can be beneficial to find a pet who aligns with one's interests and hobbies, as this can make the connection even stronger. A person who likes to hike may benefit from a pet that can handle long periods traversing the great outdoors.



• Factor in budget. Pets can be expensive. The American Kennel Club says the lifetime costs of dog ownership can range from $14,480 to $15,051 depending on the size of the dog (which relates to life expectancy). Exotic pets, such as macaws, may have large expenses for specialty vet care and cages. If money is tight, a pet that has minimal expenses might be a smarter move.

• Assess your personal health. Someone with allergies may have to avoid furry pets because dander and fur may trigger allergic reactions. Mobility issues can make it challenging for someone to walk a dog every day, making a cat who is relatively independent a more practical choice.

Lifestyle should be a major consideration when deciding if the time is right to introduce a pet into a home. A pet who aligns with the household dynamic can increase the likelihood of a successful pet-owner relationship.

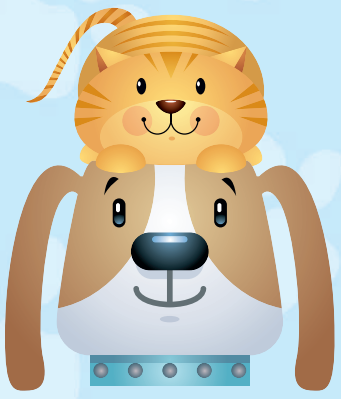
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