



Choosing the right pet

Before deciding on which particular breed of dog or cat to purchase, all potential pet owners need to be sure they are really ready for a pet in their household. Will your current lifestyle accommodate a pet?

Deciding whether or not to purchase a pet is a very important decision and one that should not be made lightly, and certainly not just on a whim.

The average lifespan of a small dog is 12 years and of a cat, 14 years. This means pet owners need to be prepared to dedicate this many years (maybe even more) to properly looking after their pet.

If you are part of a family, the decision to get a pet should be a combined one, as all family members will come into contact with the pet, and should be involved in looking after it.

Please answer these questions before deciding to own a pet

- Are you prepared to care for a dog/cat for over 10 years?
- Can you afford to own a pet with costs such as registration, vaccination, vet bills, food, grooming and boarding?
- Do you have time to care for a pet? Eg: exercise, grooming, obedience and play?
- Who will look after your pet when you're away?
- Do you live in a suitable location for a pet? Eg: away from main roads, with fences?
- Do you have adequate space for the pet you are considering?
- What hours do you work, and will the pet have any company during the day?
- If you are renting, are you permitted to own a pet?
- If you are buying a puppy/kitten, can you provide care during the day and meals at regular intervals until it is six months of age?
- Can you confine your pet in suitable accommodation for the first three weeks?
- Does a pet fit in with your lifestyle, activities, sporting pursuits and priorities?
- Are you prepared to confine your pet inside at night (in the house or shed/garage)?
- If you can properly look after a pet, you need to carefully consider which breed of dog or cat will suit your lifestyle and surroundings.

Avoid choosing a breed just because it is popular or fashionable - this can lead to unhappy outcomes for both the pet and the owner.

Don't buy a working dog (eg: kelpie or cattledog) if you live in the city unless you are prepared to give it plenty of daily exercise.

Puppies and kittens are adorable, but remember they grow up to be bigger, needing exercise, food and space.

If you are unsure about which breed of dog or cat may suit your family, ask one of our attendants. They are able to provide excellent advice about the best type of pet for you.

Take into account factors like the size of your yard, the amount of exercise you can give a pet, the type of nature you want in a pet and its grooming needs.

Of course if you do decide to purchase a dog or cat, with proper care and love, it is guaranteed to bring you many years of fun and happiness!

¹ Source: Victorian State Government Responsible Pet Ownership Program.