



What to Know Before You Adopt

Before you decide on a pet, review the information below:

Evaluate your needs

Find out what breed of dog or cat best suits your lifestyle. Are you active? Are you home a lot? Do you have children? Do you work 20 hours a day? These are all the things that need to be considered before adopting an animal.

Visit Pinellas County Animal Services

Many people's first inclination is to go to a pet store; however, local shelters have many dogs and cats to choose from in all shapes and sizes. We recommend reviewing our adoption application - preview & process form to determine what documents you should bring and/or the criteria to qualify, when adopting an animal.

Ask the shelter staff lots of questions

These are the people that are with the animals every day. Most likely, the shelter staff will be able to determine the animals' personality traits, likes, dislikes and temperament. Also, if you are looking for a specific breed or personality type, our shelter staff may be of help.

Keep your options open

A pet doesn't have to be a puppy or kitten to be a loyal companion. Older animals have a lot to offer. Oftentimes older dogs are already housebroken and leash-trained and older cats may be litter box trained and a bit more calmer than a kitten.

Take your time

It may take awhile to find that perfect pet, so be patient. You may have to visit the shelter quite often before you find the one that is right for you.

Make a decision as a family

If this pet will be a family pet, make your family a part of the decision. How does the dog/cat get along with everyone and how does everyone get along with the dog/cat? Remember you are choosing an animal to be a member of the family. Your pet may live as long as 16 to 18 years. Are you and your family prepared for such an important commitment?

Give your animal some time to adjust

Once you bring your new pet home, remember that it is in a new place and has to learn the lay of the land. Let it wander around and sniff. If there are children in the home, tell them that like a new kid in school, the animal may need a few days to adjust before it's comfortable to play. Most importantly, be patient. It may take a few weeks for the animal to feel at home and for its true personality to emerge. Keep your pet safe and do not let your pet roam free outdoors.

Use our shelter as a resource

We will be happy to offer advice to keep you and your pet together.