

# Getting a New Pet? Top Questions to Ask Yourself



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With proper care, the average lifespan for most dogs can be up to [15 years](#). Meanwhile, the average lifespan for most domesticated rabbits is between [8 and 12 years](#). It's no wonder that many people refer to pets as their "lifelong companions." Pets are indeed our loyal friends for life. Of course, this means that pet ownership is a huge [responsibility](#) that takes a lot of time and dedication. If you've been thinking of getting a new pet, here are some questions to ask yourself...

## **"Do I have enough time?"**

The ASPCA recommends asking yourself [these questions](#) when considering whether you'll be able to care for a new pet. Remember, dogs in particular are more high maintenance than some other pets, including rabbits.

Another consideration when it comes to time is life span. You'll need to dedicate yourself to taking care of this pet each and every day - possibly for decades. Even the dog breeds with the shortest average life spans live about 8-10 years. Several breeds live up to 20 years. In fact,

there has been at least one instance of a dog living [almost 30 years](#). And some other pets, like birds or cats, live [even longer](#).

### **“Can I afford a pet?”**

This is a tough question, and one that only you can answer for yourself. There is no point in getting a pet if you can't afford to take proper care of it. Start by balancing your monthly budget to determine how much you can reasonably spend on a pet, and then try to pick a pet that will fit within that budget each month. Be sure to include calculations and estimates for costs of food, water, shelter, toys, and also unexpected costs like grooming (if needed) or vet bills. One final consideration is the cost of your pet itself. How much are adoptions at your local humane society?

### **“What breed should I choose?”**

When choosing a breed, consider whether you want purebred or mixed breed. You should also consider the qualities, temperament, fur, and maintenance level of each breed. Are there breed or species restrictions where you live? Check with your landlord or apartment complex before getting a pet, if you rent. Also, depending upon where you live, you may need to check local laws about any banned breeds or specifically banned pets.

### **Where to Get a Pet**

It's extremely important to get your new pet from the proper place. Local humane societies, pet rescues, and no kill shelters are a compassionate way to find a “forever home” for a pet in need. If you're looking for a purebred (not mixed breed) pet, many of these pets are waiting in your local shelter, and there are hundreds of breed-specific animal rescues all over the country. Just be sure to avoid puppy mills, flea markets, and other pet retailers with shady or unethical practices.

### **In Conclusion...**

These questions are meant to be a starting point and are by no means all-inclusive. There are many other considerations to think of, including any additional pets in the household, any children or adults in the home, location, and more.

Are you ready for a new pet? That is a question that you will ultimately have to answer for yourself. As you can see, pet ownership takes time, patience, dedication and love. It costs money and requires effort. However, it is also one of the most rewarding experiences imaginable and allows you an important opportunity to build a bond that could last for decades.

If you're ready to take the leap into pet parenthood, [Petfinder](#) is a great resource for finding your new best friend, no matter what kind of pet you're looking for. Of course, if you're looking for a pet pig, rabbit or cat, the Great Lakes Rabbit Sanctuary has plenty of loveable creatures who would love to come home with you.

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