

What Type of Pet Should You Get? Consider These Three Things Before You Decide



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Fewer things can bring you as much joy as the unconditional love of a pet. In addition to constant companionship, pets can make you [happier and healthier](#). But owning and caring for a pet is about much more than wet-nosed kisses or furry cuddles. There are several factors any first-timer should consider before becoming a pet owner:

1. **Your Living Space** - If you [rent](#), you are likely at the mercy of your landlord or property manager when it comes to what types of pets are allowed, if any. Some rental properties only allow smaller or less aggressive canine breeds, while others will allow only cats. Check your rental agreement for these rules, as well as information regarding a pet deposit or additional fees pet-related fees. If the information isn't specifically addressed, don't assume it's okay. Instead, contact your landlord or property manager before you add a four-legged, winged, or finned roommate. Otherwise, you may have to give your new best friend away or worse, find a new place to live.

Whether you rent or own your home, the amount and type of indoor and outdoor space you have available should also be a consideration. [Small spaces](#) don't necessarily call for small pets, but it's important to do your research how much space your future pet will need. Many larger dogs are actually extremely calm and, therefore, well suited for small-space living. Other, smaller breeds may be hyperactive and need room to stretch, run, and play. You may need to make special preparations, like installing a fence or converting the guest room into a play area, to ensure your pet has the room to get the

exercise it needs. If not, he or she may develop health problems, suffer from depression, or develop behavioral issues.

2. Your Lifestyle - One size doesn't fit all when it comes to picking a pet. Luckily, there is a pet that will work for just about [everyone](#). If you can, pick a pet that naturally fits in with the parts of your life you don't intend to change. High-maintenance pets that need walking, feeding or other attention throughout the day are probably not the best bet for someone who works long hours or travels often for work, for example. There are exceptions to every rule, of course. In this case, if you have the resources to invest in doggie daycare, a [dog-walking service](#), or an in-home dog-sitting service that will care for your pet while you're away, you can likely have your cake and eat it too.

What you do during your leisure time may also help you decide what type of pet you would be happiest with... and vice versa. Are you the outdoorsy type who spends their weekends camping? Or would you prefer to curl up on the couch and read a good book? French bulldogs are only incrementally active and don't do well in the heat, so they don't make great hiking buddies. They do, however, love an afternoon nap and some snuggles. You will also want to consider the personality and temperament of the individual animal. If you have [kids](#), you'll likely need a non-aggressive, easy-going dog or cat that can withstand all the extra love and physical contact children tend to give.

3. Your Budget - The [true cost](#) of owning a pet consists of the initial acquisition costs - adoption fee, breeder fee, vaccinations, microchips, etc. - as well as general costs over the pet's lifetime - food, toys, vet visits, etc. Obviously, some pets are more expensive than others. Fish, birds, and exotic pets like snakes and lizards generally cost more upfront because you must buy and furnish their living space. But over time, these animals require little other than nourishment.

More traditional pets like dogs and cats can range in acquisition costs from free to thousands of dollars. Whether you're paying a nominal fee to rescue a pet from a shelter or shelling out thousands to a breeder, this is another instance where it's important to do your research. From special food and medical bills to grooming costs and training, some pets will require more expensive care than others over the course of their lives.

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