
Adoption Tips - Cats

How hard can it be? Cats can take care of themselves, right? Being a responsible cat owner simply means keeping him/her indoors, providing him with companionship, having him/her spayed or neutered, keeping a collar with identification on your pet, and meeting his needs of food, water, and veterinary care.

Be a responsible pet owner. Careful research and planning are essential, since being a responsible pet owner requires more than just providing adequate food, water and shelter. Potential pet owners should agree with these points before bringing a cat home.

Animals are not disposable! Animals are not articles of clothing to be thrown out once they are no longer in style. They are capable of bonding deeply with their families. Adopting a pet means making a life-long commitment, which can easily be up to 20 years for a cat.

Don't put your cat outdoors. Cats who live outside face dangers from other animals and people, and may prey on wildlife.

One adult in the home should be designated as the primary caretaker so that the pet's daily needs, such as food and water, do not become lost in the shuffle of busy schedules.

Protect your pet's health and safety. Owning a cat costs more than the adoption fee. Remember to include basic and emergency veterinary care, toys, supplies, and food. Spaying and neutering is also essential for the animal's long-term health and happiness, while providing the animal with proper identification will ensure his or her safety.

Family Adoption Tips

The ASPCA reminds you that adding a cat to your family is a big decision and that you should act with your head, as well as your heart. If your family is thinking about getting a pet, consider these important points:

Ask yourself and your children why they want a pet. Discuss their likes and dislikes, so you don't accidentally come home with a pet that frightens them. Don't forget pets are with you for 10 or 15 years.

If you are getting a pet for your child, it is unrealistic to expect the child to do all the work. No matter how mature your child is, you will need to provide constant supervision and act as a back up when your child is unable to handle

the responsibility.

Make sure your family is ready for the changes an animal will bring into your home. Young animals have needle-sharp nails and milk teeth that can hurt youngsters by accident.

Make sure no one in your family has allergies. If you are unsure about your children, have them spend time (several hours minimum) in the home of cat owning friends before bringing home a cat.

Teach your family and kids about the pet before adopting. Educate yourself and your kids through reading books about cat care. Cleaning up the litter box; feeding and playing with a cat are all part of the ongoing family responsibilities of caring for an animal.

Young kittens and children may not mix well. Very young children may unwittingly mishandle or hurt a kitten, which is particularly vulnerable to being pulled at, dropped, or picked up inappropriately.

Tips adapted from the ASPCA.