



What do I need to know before I get a new pet?

For many Australians a pet is an important part of the family. While owning a pet can be extremely rewarding, it is important to remember that pet ownership is also a huge responsibility. As a pet owner you will be committed to providing for all the requirements of your pet – food, exercise, housing, grooming and veterinary care. It is absolutely essential to thoroughly research the basics of pet care before acquiring any new pet to ensure you have the capacity to meet the physiological, behavioural and social needs of the animal.

It is recommended that you take the time to research the species or breed/crossbreed you are purchasing well before bringing them home, so that you are positive your choice of pet will be appropriate for your lifestyle and you are well prepared for their arrival.

Purchasing a pet should never be an impulsive decision. RSPCA shelters receive thousands of unwanted and abandoned animals each year and these are often the result of an ill-considered decision. Before you make the decision to become a pet owner ask yourself the following questions:

Am I prepared to care for a pet for its whole life?

The average lifespan of dogs and cats is around 12 years, with some dogs and cats living until 15 or even 20 years of age so it's a long-term commitment. While puppies and kittens are irresistibly adorable, you will need to be prepared to provide for an adult animal too and, in the case of some dogs, a much larger animal with considerable exercise requirements and a sizeable appetite.

Can I afford a pet?

There are many costs involved with pet ownership. Up front costs for cats and dogs include vaccination, microchipping and desexing. However, you will need to be prepared to pay for ongoing costs associated with food, worming, annual health checks, vet bills, training, boarding, toys and bedding for the life of the animal. If an emergency or accident occurs, you will also need to ensure you can pay for any emergency veterinary treatment required.

The costs of pet ownership will vary depending on the type of animal you choose. Remember that pets are an expensive addition to the family.

Do I understand how to care for a pet?

It is your responsibility, as a pet owner, to thoroughly research the basic requirements of your chosen pet. You should do this before considering purchasing your pet and prior to bringing your pet home so that you are well informed about the species-specific needs of your pet and so you're ready to take good care of it. You could look for a comprehensive book about your chosen species and other information about your chosen breed/crossbreed. If you are considering adoption, talk to the relevant adoption organisation and ask for information or if you are purchasing from a breeder, ask the breeder for more information such as how much space and exercise is needed.

"caring for the pets of ipswich since 1967"

Drs Jason Wendt BVSc (Hons), Scot Campbell BVSc (Hons) MACVSc DACVN & Associates

Ipswich Vet Group Pty Ltd T/A Booval Veterinary Hospital ACN 010 432 916 ABN 89 010 432 916



Do I have time to care for a pet?

Caring for a pet takes a considerable amount of time each and every day. Exercise, socialisation, grooming, feeding, reward-based training, play time and providing company and attention are all critical aspects of pet ownership. Some pets will require more of your time than others but each pet will require daily care so you need to be sure you have time available each day. Puppies and kittens are a particularly large time investment.

Do I live in suitable accommodation with adequate space for a pet?

First carefully consider if you can provide suitable accommodation for your pet both now and well into the future. Are you allowed to keep pets at your current residence? Your home size and/or garden size are factors in determining your suitability as a pet owner for certain types of animals. If you're thinking about getting a dog - do you have a yard? Is it secure? If you don't have a yard, where will your dog be housed when you're not at home? If it is inside, where will the dog go to the toilet? Can you get home to let it outside every few hours?

If you rent your property has your landlord given you written permission to have a dog or other pet? What will happen if you have to move?

Will a pet fit into my lifestyle and priorities?

Working hours, a busy social life and taking regular trips away are all factors that need to be carefully considered before purchasing a pet. Companion animals thrive on human company and will always depend on you. You must be sure that your lifestyle will accommodate them. Before you purchase a pet consider their specific requirements. Are you prepared to walk your dog everyday? Are you home often enough to keep your cat or dog company and give them attention? Do you have time to give your puppy or kitten the basic reward-based training it needs? Who will care for your pet when you are away from home?

"caring for the pets of ipswich since 1967"

Drs Jason Wendt BVSc (Hons), Scot Campbell BVSc (Hons) MACVSc DACVN & Associates

Ipswich Vet Group Pty Ltd T/A Booval Veterinary Hospital ACN 010 432 916 ABN 89 010 432 916