



GUNNISON VALLEY ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE

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In placing animals, the Welfare League looks to find the right fit between you and your adopted pet. Here is some information to consider as you are thinking about adopting:

Are You Ready For a Pet?

Far too many animals in this country are initially loved and then neglected or abandoned over time because owners decide -- too late -- that caring for pets is more responsibility than they actually want. The truth is, adopting a companion animal is a big step -- one that will affect your lifestyle for many years. Have you thought about how a pet will be completely dependent on you for his or her entire life? What will happen if you decide to move? And have you considered whether your lifestyle and personality would make you a better dog or cat owner?

How Long is a Lifetime?

With good care, most dogs can live 12 to 15 years and most cats can live 15 to 20 years, so it is critical that you consider what is likely to be happening in your own life over the next 15 to 20 years before you adopt a pet.

- What major changes might happen to you during a pet's lifetime? Marriage? Children? New job? Long-distance move? Are you willing to continue spending the time, energy and money to care for your pet when taking on new responsibilities like those?
- What will you do if your spouse or child is allergic to or cannot get along with your pet?
- If you're getting a pet for children you have now, are you willing to take on the responsibility of caring for this pet when your children grow up, lose interest or move away?
- Have you previously owned a pet that died prematurely due to a preventable accident or illness, such as being hit by a car or suffering from heartworm disease? If so, what will you do differently with a new pet to prevent the same thing from happening again?

These websites provide additional information you may find helpful:

- <http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/adopt/>
- <http://www.aspca.org/adoption/adoption-tips/questions-to-ask-before-adopting.aspx>

Is a Dog Right For You?

Dogs are wonderful, devoted, loving companions who can enrich the lives of you and your family. It is important to remember, however, that people who decide to open their homes to a dog are making a decision to change their daily lives and routines. For many, the years of companionship and unconditional love and devotion they receive from their dog far outweigh the daily responsibilities.

Here are some website with useful information:

- <http://www.doginformat.com/b4ugetadog.htm>

- <http://www.livingwithkidsanddogs.com/index.html>
- <http://www.doggonessafe.com/>

If you decide that a canine would fit perfectly into your family, there are more things to consider...

What are you looking for in a dog?

Always consider the qualities and personality you want, before size and appearance. For example, a laid back bulldog might do better than a more energetic terrier in an apartment. Think about your lifestyle and habits and determine which breed is best suited to you. Consider how much time you are willing to spend exercising your dog, as this will often help determine the best canine companion for you. Know everything you want in a dog except what the animal looks like. Very often the pet that has the qualities you are looking for will come in an unexpected package.

You May Be the Perfect Dog Owner if You . . .

- You are excited about the idea of looking after a dog for the next 15 or so years.
- Like sharing your house with someone who sheds, tracks dirt occasionally and possibly drools.
- Don't mind sharing your house with someone who will never clean up after him or herself.
- Want to take care of someone every day.
- Love a playmate who likes to chase balls and may drag off shoes.
- Don't mind a playmate who likes to slobber on balls and toys.
- Would like to spend your extra money on pet food, toys, veterinary care, chew bones and more chew bones.
- Want someone to adore you even on a bad hair day.
- Believe that spaying and neutering pets will help solve the pet overpopulation problem.
- Can't imagine leaving your devoted pet behind when you move.
- Want to keep an ID tag on your pets, so they can always get back to you no matter what.
- Enjoy unconditional love and constant companionship

Is a Cat Right For You?

While cats make purr-fect pets for some people, they don't for others. As with dogs, cats are dependent on their owners for all their needs -- food, water, medical attention, exercise, shelter, and, most important, companionship. Cats tend to be more independent, after all, we are lucky to live in their world. Here are some websites with additional information about cats:

- <http://cats.about.com/od/newtocats/tp/beforeadoptingacat.htm>
- <http://www.cyberpet.com/cats/articles/findpet/getkit.htm>
- http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/cats/tips/introducing_new_cat.html

If you have decided that a feline would fit perfectly into your family, there are still more things to consider...

Do you want a kitten or an adult cat?

This is especially important to decide before you meet available cats. The attraction of tiny mewling kittens is hard to resist, but kittens need a lot of attention and will have to be house-trained. On the plus side, kittens adapt quickly to their surroundings. For many people, an adult cat is a wise choice, especially if they are at work all day or would not enjoy the boisterous antics of a kitten.

What is your preferred coat length?

Do you want a cat with long, medium, or short hair? Long-haired cats require almost daily brushing to keep their fur from matting, so be prepared to spend regular time grooming these cats.

Do you want a male cat or a female cat?

Both male and female felines can be equally playful and affectionate! Gender is based purely on personal preference!

YOU MAY BE THE PERFECT CAT OWNER IF YOU . . .

- Excited about caring for a cat for the next 15 – 18 years.
- Look forward to having your ankles rubbed by an affectionate, hairy animal.
- Don't mind sharing your house with someone who sheds, tracks kitty litter and throws up hairballs.
- Don't mind sharing your house with someone who will never clean up after him or herself.
- Love a housemate who will randomly and regularly entertain you with outrageous and silly antics (at his whim, not yours).
- Want to take care of someone every day.
- Like your lap warmed whenever you sit down.
- Would like to spend your extra money on pet food, toys, veterinary care, kitty litter and more kitty litter.
- Want to be welcomed with a soft purr of appreciation.
- Believe that spaying and neutering pets will help solve the pet overpopulation problem.
- Can't imagine leaving your devoted pet behind when you move.
- Want to keep an ID tag on your pets, so they can always get back to you no matter what.
- Enjoy unconditional love and constant companionship.

Adoption Fees

GVAWL adoption fees are as follows:

- \$75 per kitten
- \$50 per cat
- \$150 per puppy
- \$100 per dog

[Why are there Adoption Fees for Homeless Dogs and Cats?](#)

Although the adoption fee is one way we use to subsidize the cost of caring for our rescued pets, it also serves one other function. The adoption fee will put off anybody who is not willing to spend money on properly caring for his or her companion animal. The sad reality is that if someone cannot afford a \$50 - \$150 adoption fee, then they are unlikely to be able to afford care for a companion when he falls ill or has an accident. Saving the money it takes to adopt a dog is a lot easier than having \$500.00 cash in hand when something goes wrong and medical attention is necessary.

If someone won't spend it to bring home a loving companion, then it is more than likely that they won't spend it when it is really needed either. It is a harsh world out there for dogs, and making sure the dogs and cats go to a good, responsible home that will care for them for the rest of their life is the number one concern of most shelter and rescue volunteers.