



## In this document:

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Choosing a pet should be a family project with everyone's needs, concerns, fears, and medical history considered so make a big effort to involve all the family and remember to be realistic and try to work your way through the following questions in order to identify the best animal(s) for your living space, lifestyle, and budget.

### Is it practical for you to have a pet?

You may have decided that you would like a pet without even considering aspects such as a no pet clause in your rental agreement, the costs of having a pet, or any allergies that a family member has that could potentially prevent them from living in close proximity with an animal companion.

It is therefore vital that you first consider the practicality of pet ownership to decide whether you and your family are able to introduce a pet into your home.

### Do you have space?

Whilst pets such as birds and small mammals don't need a great deal of space, its important to bear in mind that animals such as young active dogs will require more space both indoors and outdoors to allow for a greater amount of daily exercise. Therefore this must be your next considerations when making the decision about what pet is right for your family and your home.

## What does pet ownership mean to you?

The ways in which you and your family spend your time will have a direct influence on what pet will most suit your lifestyle, so this area is certainly worth giving a good deal of thought.

By examining the reasons why you would like an animal companion, you will find that it becomes much easier to narrow the list of potential pets. For example, if you like the idea of showing a pet then physical attributes will play an important role in your choice, whereas if you are looking for a pet as a companion to spend time with, then perhaps temperament will be the key driver in influencing your choice. It is important your lifestyle is considered so write a list of all the areas that are important to you and your family when considering pet ownership, then prioritise these areas to define the key factors that you want pet ownership to meet.

Now its time to do a bit of research on your own to establish what pets fit these criteria and would integrate best into your life.

## Is your home prepared for a pet?

It's important to remember that the planning process doesn't stop once you have decided what animal companion is going become part of your family. It's now time for a bit of preparation to make sure your new pet will be comfortable and happy from the outset. Make sure your home is ready for the pet, ensure you have a place for your pet to sleep, have a supply of food in the cupboard, register with a local vet and finally ensure you have all the necessary accessories (such as a lead for a puppy etc.)

*Happy pet ownership!!!*

