TAKE A SECOND LOOK!
Consider Adopting an Adult Cat or Dog

We know what you're thinking. Those puppies and kittens are so cute, they're almost impossible to pass up. When you see those playful balls of fluff with their soulful eyes, how can you choose to adopt a mature animal instead?

But please give us a few moments of your time. Give us a chance to convince you to adopt an older pet instead. We guarantee you won't be sorry!

Be a Lifesaver

Why did you come to an animal shelter to adopt your pet? Most likely, one of the reasons was to save an animal's life. And that's exactly what you are doing when you adopt a shelter animal. The old saying, "It's raining cats and dogs" is an understatement—it's more like a torrential downpour. Nearly eight million animals are humanely killed each year in animal shelters. Sadly, adult mixed breed animals are usually first in line to meet this needless fate. Why? Because they are less likely to be adopted.

Certainly, puppies and kittens are as deserving of good homes as adult animals. But an older, more mature animal might be the pet who's right for you—and he could be one, two, five, or even ten years old!

So lift up those feet and walk past the puppy and kitten rooms. Go have a look at the adult animals. After all, puppies and kittens reach maturity in only a few short months anyway, and then what do you have? An adult animal!

So Many to Choose From

The first thing you'll notice in the adult wards is greater selection. The very nature of an animal shelter—a haven for lost and homeless pets—means many of the animals are adults.

And a shelter is a terrific place to find the pet of your dreams. Where else can you find so many breeds, ages, and personalities under one roof? Can't decide between a shepherd, a collie, and a poodle? Not sure if you want a Siamese, a Burmese, or a Maine Coon? Get them all in one animal by adopting a mixed breed. See how they'll look "grown up" by choosing an adult.

A Long, Happy Life Together

Mixed breeds tend to combine the attractive traits of their ancestors, and they tend to be healthier and longer-lived than purebreds. These benefits are even greater if your new pet is an adult. Adult animals are less delicate and better able to ward off potential health problems. They've usually been vaccinated already, and their health is often a known factor. All this, and you still have years of enjoyment and companionship to look forward to.

A Smooth Transition

If that isn't enough to convince you, let us try a one-word argument: *housebreaking*. Adult animals are usually calmer and less destructive, and many are already housebroken and trained.

Think about fitting puppy housebreaking into your full-time work schedule. Because puppies need their owners to be home more often during the day, a full-grown pet will be less disruptive to your usual lifestyle. And think about trying to sleep while a young kitten runs through the house at breakneck speed. Adult cats, while still curious and playful, have all the admirable qualities that come with maturity.

Yes, eventually all that trouble is worth it, but if you start with an adult animal, the adjustment period is more likely to be smooth and fit your lifestyle.

New Tricks!

The adage that you can't teach an old dog (or cat, for that matter) new tricks is hogwash. Adult animals are often easier to train than younger pets. After all, they've lived a little and are wiser—just like their owners. And many have been previously owned and may have a storehouse of tricks they are waiting to share with their new family.

A Second Chance

The bottom line is that there are plenty of adult animals at the shelter, each with his or her own story of disappointment and betrayal. Maybe their past owners thought they were too big and no longer "cute." Maybe they wandered outside and got lost, and their owners didn't bother to go looking for them. Maybe their owners moved and didn't take them along.

Whatever the reason, they're at the shelter because they're no longer wanted. But there are plenty of good reasons to adopt them.

Sure, puppies and kittens are cute and can make wonderful pets. Older animals, though, may be more appropriate for *you*.

Won't you consider opening your heart and home and giving them a second chance? Somebody needs to!

Provided by The Humane Society of the United States.