

# Are You Really Ready for a Pet?

At the very minimum taking care of a pet requires you to do the following **EVERY DAY**:

- Give your pet food to eat
- Provide them with fresh water to drink
- Make sure they have adequate shelter to protect them from the heat and cold
- Exercise your pet
- Clean up after your pet

You will also need to provide your pet with the following:

- A bed to sleep in
- A collar with an ID tag
- A dog license
- Toys to play with
- Training (litter box training for cats, obedience training for dogs)
- Scratching posts for cats
- Chew toys
- A leash for walking
- A pet carrier/seat belt for traveling (i.e. to the vet, to a park, etc.)

Pets will occasionally need:

- Vet care (spay/neuter surgery, vaccinations, illness, etc.)
- Dental care
- Grooming (depending on the breed of pet you get this could be a daily task!)

*Taking care of a pet is a BIG responsibility! It is also one that is not appropriate for young children! Many adults buy their children pets thinking that the child will learn responsibility by caring for it. However, many times children are not capable of handling this or they lose interest and the adult ends up caring for the pet and eventually grows to resent it. Getting a pet needs to be a family decision.*

Adults need to ask themselves the following questions:

- Am I allowed to have a pet? If you live in an apartment you will need to check with your landlord.
- Do I have the time/money/energy to properly care for a pet?
- Do I have the patience to teach my new pet the rules of the house and can I be consistent in my training? (i.e. housebreaking, digging, chewing, barking, scratching furniture, etc.)
- Do I have enough space to house a new pet? Large dogs need large yards to run in.
- Do I care if a pet sheds hair in my house?
- Am I willing to put up with fleas, odors, and accidents?

If you answered "NO" to any of the above questions you are NOT ready to get a pet and should think about getting a stuffed animal instead.



OR



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San Bernardino County  
Animal Care & Control Program

**(800) 472-5609**