

Adopting Instead of Buying a Pet

- While estimates vary, approximately three to four million dogs and cats are euthanized (“put to sleep”) each year in the United States because too few people spay or neuter the pets they have, too few adopt their new pets, and too many give up their pets.
- By adopting a pet from an animal shelter or rescue group, you’ll help save the lives of two animals—the pet you adopt and a homeless animal that can be rescued because of space you make available.
- Animal shelters and rescue groups have plenty of healthy, well-behaved animals waiting for a home.
- Adopting a pet from an animal shelter is much less expensive than buying a pet.
- Although many shelters and rescue groups have purebred animals, an adopted mixed-breed pet may be healthier than a purebred pet and, therefore, cost less overall.

.....
If you’re thinking of adding a pet to your household, there are many good reasons to adopt instead of buy one.

You’ll Save Lives

While the estimates vary, approximately three to four million dogs and cats are euthanized (“put to sleep”) each year in the United States because too few people spay or neuter the pets they have, too few adopt their new pets, and too many give up their pets. Because space at shelters is limited, staff members must make the difficult decision to euthanize healthy animals that aren’t adopted within a certain amount of time.

The number of euthanized animals could be reduced greatly if more people adopted pets instead of buying them. By adopting from an animal shelter or rescue group, you’ll help save the lives of two animals—the pet you adopt and a homeless animal that can be rescued because of space you make available.

You’ll Get a Great Pet

Animal shelters and rescue groups have plenty of healthy, well-behaved animals waiting for a home. Most

shelters examine and vaccinate animals when they arrive, and many shelters spay or neuter them before adoption. In addition to providing medical care, more and more shelters and rescue groups screen animals for specific temperaments (“personality” characteristics) and behaviors to match pets with prospective owners.

It is a common belief that animals end up in shelters because they were abused or behaved badly. In truth, most animals in shelters are there because of “people reasons”: divorce, moving, lack of time, and financial constraints are among the most common reasons why pets lose their homes. Adopted pets are just as loving, intelligent, and loyal as purchased pets.

You’ll Save Money

Adopting a pet from an animal shelter is much less expensive than buying a pet at a pet store or through other sources. Buying a pet can easily cost \$500 to \$1000 or more; adoption costs range from \$50 to \$200. In addition, animals from many shelters are already spayed or neutered and vaccinated, which makes the shelter’s fee a bargain.

Although many shelters and rescue groups have purebred animals, an adopted mixed-breed pet may be healthier than a purebred pet and, therefore, cost less overall.

Although many shelters and rescue groups have purebred animals, an adopted mixed-breed pet may be healthier than a purebred pet (purebred pets are more likely to have genetic problems) and, therefore, cost less overall.

You Won’t Support Puppy or Kitten Mills

Puppy and kitten mills are factory-style breeding facilities that put profit above the welfare of animals.

Choices and Considerations

Most animals raised in these mills are housed in poor conditions with improper medical care. They are often in poor health and have ongoing behavior and health problems due to lack of human companionship and inbreeding. Mill animals are sold to unsuspecting consumers in pet stores, over the Internet, and through newspaper classified advertisements.

By adopting instead of buying a pet, you can be certain that you aren't supporting puppy or kitten mills.

You Can Choose a Pet of Any Age

Although puppies and kittens are cute, they can require a lot of work to train. An adult or older pet that is already trained may be a better fit for your

lifestyle. For example, adopting an adult dog that is already housetrained and knows basic commands is often much easier than adopting a puppy.

You're Likely to Have a Support System

Most pet stores don't provide any support if you have questions or problems with your new pet. However, rescue groups do provide support for new owners because keeping pets in good homes is in the best interest of these groups.

Search for adoptable pets on Web sites like Petfinder.com and theshelterpetproject.org or contact your local shelter for adoptable pets in your area.