

## Are you ready to adopt a new pet?

If you are struggling with this decision, here is some useful information to help you answer this question:

- Knowing why you want to adopt a pet can help you determine the species and breed that will fit your lifestyle. For example, are you looking for a companion for your child?
- When you adopt a pet, you are making a commitment to care for the pet for the rest of its life – that could mean 10 – 15 years for a dog and up to 20 years for a cat. In that period of time, a person will likely go through lifestyle changes such as moves, birth of children, change of jobs. Will you still be able to care for your pet?
- When deciding on the kind of pet you want, your personality and lifestyle, challenges such as space restrictions and amount of time spent at home, should all be taken into consideration. Research different species and breeds and get advice from Animal Care and Control staff!
- You will need financial resources to own a pet. Food, veterinary care, proper identification, pet supplies will be a consistent expense through the life of your pet
- Dogs thrive on several hours of exercise and companionship every day. Dogs who are left alone too often or too long can develop behavioural problems. Cats are healthiest and happiest when living indoors, but will need daily stimulation and play sessions with their families. If your work demands that you travel often or if you are out of the house most days and evenings, this may not be the right time to adopt a pet.
- Lack of training is one of the most common reasons that adopters return pets to shelters. Basic training helps dogs and their owners communicate better, strengthening the relationship overall. Taking time to understand your cat's behaviour, especially when it involves litter box and scratching habits, will help you avoid potential problems.
- Your living space should be appropriate for the pet that you choose. Even if you are prepared to provide adequate exercise for your large, active dog, a small living space may not be a good environment for the dog.

If you've taken all of this into consideration and you believe that the rewards of owning a pet will outweigh any potential challenges, you are ready to adopt a new pet! If you still have questions, seek advice from an Animal Care and Control worker or Veterinarian.