



# CHOOSING THE RIGHT PET

Here are a few things to consider when choosing the right pet for you.

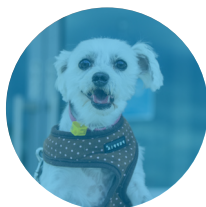
## YOUR BUDGET

The cost of adopting or buying your pet is just the start of a financial commitment you will be making. There will be ongoing costs throughout your pet's life that you need to be prepared for.

These costs can include:

- Food
- Litter
- Flea and worming treatments
- Council registration fees
- Microchipping
- Grooming
- Toys
- Bedding, cage, shelter, tank
- Collars, leashes and ID tags
- Vaccinations
- Vet check ups
- Pet insurance
- Treatments for injuries, illnesses or other health conditions that might come up.

Some pets will cost more to look after than others – for example, larger dogs will need more food than smaller dogs. Different breeds of pets may also be more prone to certain health conditions later in life.



## YOUR LIFESTYLE

Caring for a pet can take up a lot of your time and energy. This includes feeding, exercising and playtime - you need to be able to make time for your pet every day. Some pets are more energetic and need lots of space and outdoor time, while others, like fish can entertain themselves.

If you work long hours, have lots of commitments away from home or travel a lot, you should consider how much pet care you can fit in...

- Will your pet be happy to entertain itself while you're at work?
- How many times a week will you need to walk it?
- Is there someone who can help when you're away overnight or longer?

## YOUR LIVING SPACE

The size of your home and garden will also impact what sort of pet you should choose. A few things to consider include:

- How much outdoor space do you have?
- Are you allowed to keep pets at your current residence? What will happen if you move?
- Where will your pet go to the toilet?
- Are there any safety hazards in your home you will need to remove?

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### ADOPTING A PET...

In shelters and pounds all around Australia, there are plenty of loving animals in need of new homes. By adopting a pet, you can give an animal a new start in a safe and loving home, which can be an incredibly rewarding experience.

If you would like to adopt a dog through Council, please phone 1300 007 662 or look for updates on Council's website or the *MyMaranoa* Facebook Page. All pets available for adoption have undergone health and temperament checks to ensure their suitability as pets – so all you need to do is bring them home prepared to love and care for them.

### DIFFERENT BREEDS

We all have our favourite types of dogs and cats, and those cute little faces can be hard to resist – but **don't choose a breed based on looks alone.**

Different breeds have different needs and personalities, and the one that best suits your lifestyle might not be the one you originally had your heart set on. Do your research and get all the information you need to make the best decision.

Think about factors such as:

- Why do you want a pet? For example, do you want a pet that is independent and requires little contact or are you looking for an energetic companion with whom you can jog or play Frisbee with?
- Is this the right time in your life to get a pet?
- How long your pet may live? For example, average dogs and cats live 12-16 years – some longer.
- Does anyone in your family suffer from allergies to particular animals/breeds?

### A FEW SPECIES TO CONSIDER...

**Dogs:** Intelligent, affectionate, sociable creatures. They require lots of time and energy and bond closely with their family. Research any breed carefully as some have very specific needs.

**Cats:** They're more independent than dogs and generally manage spending more time on their own. Once again, particular breeds are more suitable for different families, so research carefully before you adopt.

**Guinea Pigs:** Low maintenance, sweet and they rarely bite. However, they're not suitable for little people under 6 years old – they're too fragile to handle a squeeze from a toddler.

**Turtles, Lizards, Snakes:** Before considering a reptile, make sure you know exactly how you're going to care for it, what its vivarium conditions needs to be, how you will feed it and who you can call on to care for it when you go away. Please note that keeping of certain reptiles, amphibians and exotic pets may require a licence. For more information, visit the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection website.

**Cockatiels, Parrots, Cockatoos, Parakeets:** These birds are very sociable and enjoy human interaction.

**Fish:** This may be the right start for your family if you don't have a lot of time or money to devote to a pet.

