



ARIZONA HUMANE SOCIETY

Improving the Lives of Animals Since 1957

ADOPTING A PET: IS THIS THE BEST TIME?

SO, YOU THINK YOU'RE READY TO ADOPT A FURRY FRIEND? There is no doubt that pets add companionship, love and fun to our lives! However, they're also a lifetime responsibility and a promise to another living being. Choosing to add a pet to your family is a very important, life-altering decision. If you're experiencing other life changes, adopting a pet may be too much added responsibility at the same time.

Pet Challenge Quiz

Take this quiz to assess what's happening in your life now, and in the near future, to help you decide if this is the best time to adopt a pet. ✓ Check the following events that have either occurred in your life in the last 6 months, as well as those that you anticipate may occur in the next 6 months:

- Marriage
- Divorce or end of a relationship
- Financial concerns
- Pregnancy/new baby or anticipated adoption
- Children younger than 5 years of age (your own, visiting grandchildren, in-home daycare)
- Move to a new residence (state, city, or just across the street)
- Move to a new residence that allows only certain-size pets; or the pet you are considering exceeds or will exceed the limit
- Extensive remodeling or renovation your existing home
- Change in living arrangements (roommates/significant other moving in or out)
- Longer hours or increased responsibility at work
- Change in working status of a family member (begins work, changes jobs or retirement)
- Significant changes in family routine (work or school schedules, vacations, retirement, etc.)
- Vacation or work-related trips within 3 weeks of adoption
- Graduation from high school or college
- Frequent travel, either for business or pleasure
- Limited leisure or free time
- Children leaving home or moving back home (with kids or pets)
- Care-taking responsibilities for elderly or ill family member
- Family members who have allergies, illness, or compromised or significant health problems
- Death of a family member
- Death or disappearance of a family pet
- Relinquishment of a pet (given away or taken to an animal shelter)
- Gift for a family member who has not been consulted
- Impulse (it is so cute, begging children, had one just like this when I was a kid)
- Disagreement among family members about adopting a pet
- Disagreement among family members about what kind or species of pet to adopt

_____ Add 1 point for every pet you currently have (each aquarium counts as one pet)

_____ Total

To see how you scored on the "Pet Challenge" turn the page!

Scoring

- 0-4:** **CONGRATULATIONS!** Your life seems pretty stable; now is a good time to add a pet to your life.
- 5-7:** **THE TIMING MIGHT BE RIGHT!** Even though you have a lot of responsibilities right now, adopting a pet may still work for you. An adult cat; or well-trained, adult dog; or a small mammal would probably be more appropriate than a kitten, a puppy or an active breed of dog.
- 8-12:** **WAIT;** let's think twice about this. With all the changes and responsibilities in your life right now, you may not have time to care for and give a new pet the attention he deserves. It would probably be better for both you and the pet if you wait until your life settles down a bit. Get an adoption gift certificate for yourself, as inspiration.
- 13+:** **STOP! PLEASE DON'T ADOPT A PET A THIS TIME!** Acquiring a pet at this point in time is not a sensible decision! You have far too much going on in your life! Your ability to devote the time, energy and training to a new pet is very limited and erratic! Instead, live vicariously through a friend or family member, or consider a pet rock, plush toy or a "cyber-pet !"

For more information, please visit

www.azhumane.org

Adapted from material originally developed by applied animal behaviorists at the Dumb Friends League, Denver, Colorado
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