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## Managing Your Pet: Tips for First-Time Pet Owners

Getting your first pet is a big decision, and while animals can bring so much joy and love to your life, they can also be a [big responsibility](#) to take on. No matter what kind of animal you choose to bring into your home and family, it's always important to make sure you understand all the work that will come along with it. Even dogs that are house-trained can often leave messes behind, and those that have spent time in a shelter may have anxiety or other issues that can lead to behavior problems, especially if you aren't home with them all day.

Doing a bit of research ahead of time will prepare you as much as possible for life as a pet parent, and it will allow you to make the best choices when it comes to [choosing the right animal](#) for you. Look up some information on breeds — including which ones are best with kids, which ones are prone to health issues, and which ones tend to need more attention and care — before making a decision, and talk to your family to make sure everyone is on the same page.

Keep reading for some great tips on how to be the best pet owner you can be.

## **Find the Right Pet**

If you have small children or you're on a busy schedule, it's important to [look for a pet](#) that will work well with your family. Cats are much more self-sufficient than most other animals, so they're great for families that work long hours or need to spend time away from home during the day. Some breeds tend to have more [health issues](#) than others; for instance, pugs and dogs with pushed-in faces may have breathing issues. Look online for more information about the pet you're interested in before you make a decision.

## **Make Life a Little Easier**

When you own a pet, it's a good idea to make things as easy as possible when it comes to taking good care of them. For cats, that likely means finding the right litter box, as this can be the toughest part of your day. Cleaning out the dirty litter can take some work and is often unpleasant, but the right box will help you stay on top of things. Look online and [read reviews](#) of self-cleaning boxes that will make the job much easier.

## **Prep Your Home**

Preparing your home for a new pet can take some time and work, but it will help the two of you settle in and get used to one another more quickly. Make sure you have everything he'll need ready to go — food, bowls, toys, bedding, and anything necessary for his bathroom needs — before you bring him home. Look for [safety issues](#), such as dangling cords that might look fun to chew on or [toxic plants](#), and remove them as soon as possible.

## **Help Him Get Acclimated**

Many pets can take a little while to [become accustomed](#) to their new digs, so it's important to give him some time to get used to your home. Allow him to explore safely by using baby gates on the stairs or to block off rooms you don't want him to have access to, and keep things low-key during the first week. This means asking visitors to wait a little while before stopping by so he can get used to your immediate family first. This will allow you to figure out his routine and will give him time to get used to yours.

Managing a new pet always takes a little time, so try to be patient during the first few months. Give your new pet [lots of exercise](#); not only will this help him stay healthy, but it will also prevent many different behavioral issues, especially when you're away from the house. Most importantly, take some time to get to know your new best friend.