



Are You Really Ready for a Puppy?



by Melody Keilig

With social media showing us adorable puppy videos and a picture-perfect life, we may get tempted to adopt a pup. But too often, we don't see the not-so-fun side of providing for a puppy, so here's how to prep before you get your pup!

Who isn't tempted to bring a puppy home because "he's just so darn cute!?" Maybe you've moved to a new city and feel lonely, you're bored of your regular daily routine, or you've always wanted a puppy, and now you think it's the perfect time for you. But you must [be prepared](#) for the not-so-fun parts of bringing a puppy home.

We're talking about paying vet bills, buying puppy toys, a [proper crate](#), blankets, food, and even [dental care](#)! There's nothing more important for a puppy than having a safe, clean, and loving home. Here's how to ensure that the puppies we bring home are properly cared for and come from humane sources.

Where to Get Your Puppy

Although we strongly advocate for adopting puppies and dogs before going to a breeder, there are humane ways to do both. However, we'll primarily focus on the best ways to give a shelter puppy or dog a loving home.

When looking for a puppy to bring into your home, never purchase one from a pet store. Even if they claim to be humane, it's very likely that the pet store is buying puppies from puppy mills.

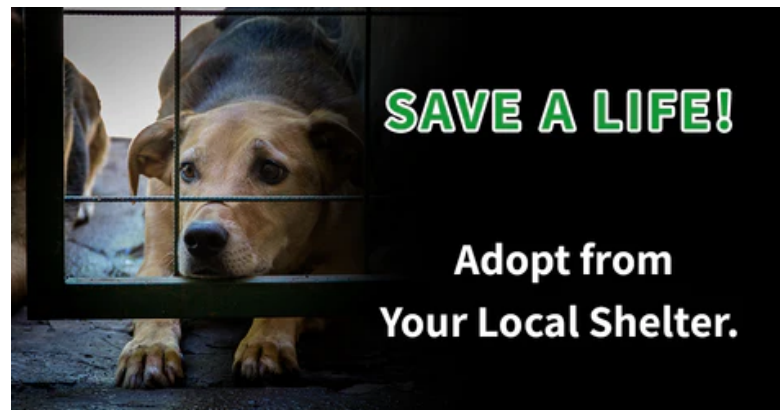
[Rewards](#)





These cruel operations keep dogs and puppies in cramped, unclean, and inhumane conditions. Unfortunately, the people who run these puppy mills breed as many puppies as possible to sell and make money.

The only places you should be able to pay for a puppy are at animal shelters, rescue organizations or responsible breeders. So don't give pet stores your money if you're looking for a puppy. It will only empower the puppy mills in the background even more.



You never want to purchase a puppy through a website, especially if you aren't allowed by the breeder to visit the facilities. This is a huge red flag because you should be able to view any facility with dogs looking for a home. So if you ask the breeder to visit the building and they refuse or give you excuses, don't give them your money.

Why We Highly Recommend Adopting from Shelters

Finding responsible breeders is possible, but they won't always have puppies because they breed sparingly. Suppose you're looking for a puppy, and the breeders in your area don't have any ready to adopt. In that case, it's better to adopt from a shelter or from a rescue where there is a consistent flow of dogs needing loving homes.

Why wait weeks to months for a puppy when there are dogs and pups in the shelter [waiting for adoption?](#)





If you're in love with a particular dog breed, look for breed-specific rescue organizations so you can adopt the breed you love. But, sometimes, it's not about the breed but about the instant connection you feel with dogs. Give all of the [shelter dogs](#) a chance and see who you can find at your local shelter: you never know when you'll have that magical connection!

Think About Responsibility

Okay, you've got your plan about where you'll adopt your puppy. Now it's time to consider how your life could change as soon as you bring a puppy into your home.

BE PREPARED:

Think about how your life will change after adopting a puppy.



Go through your regular routine and think about how having a puppy could change that routine. For example, would it be challenging to take time off work to bring your puppy to the veterinarian? Do you live alone and will have to leave your puppy home at times? When you come home, whether from work or from running errands, will you have the willpower to take a walk with your puppy?

Don't feel bad if you sometimes have second thoughts. This is a good sign that you're genuinely considering the life of the puppy you want to bring into your life and not just looking to adopt for the fun moments. This exercise is getting you ready to prepare so you can bring your puppy into a stress-free environment.

List Your Expenses



Next up, create a list of your monthly expenses to understand what you could be spending on your puppy every month. Even if you somehow got a puppy for free, this doesn't mean that you won't be spending a lot of money on them. According to the American Kennel Club, [several expensive costs](#) are involved in owning a puppy.



For example, the average annual expense of caring for a puppy is about \$2,489. These costs include food, vet bills, travel, grooming, pet sitting or boarding, toys, treats, dog training, and dog events.

You may not spend money on every single one of these things. For example, if you never travel far from home, you probably won't consider travel costs for you and your dog. Or, if you don't go to dog events like sports and shows, that's an expense you can cut out. But, it's still crucial to list any possible costs to financially prepare.



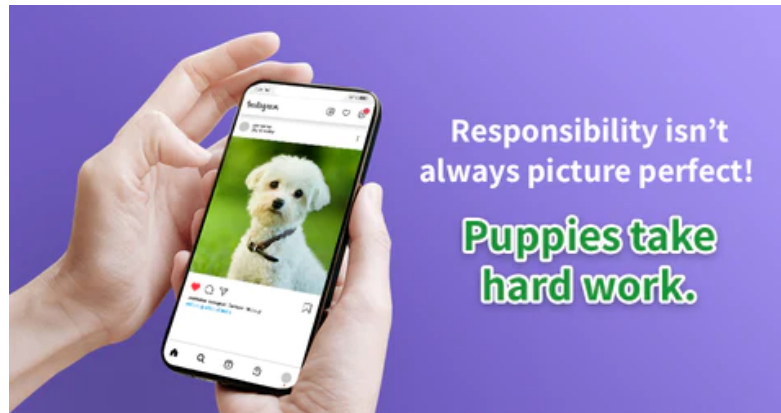
Likewise, the average expenditure on a one-time adoption or purchase of a puppy adds up to about \$2,127. These costs include the puppy's adoption fee or purchase price, spaying or neutering, vet bills, medical emergencies, dog training fees, and general supplies like bowls, collars, leashes, a crate, etc.

Again, this is an estimate, so you don't have to follow these average costs by heart. But it's good to keep the prices in mind and adjust them based on what you know you'll need. For example, this could be money for dog food, basic supplies, vet bills, and money prepared to be set aside in case of medical emergencies.

Take the 7-day Puppy Challenge

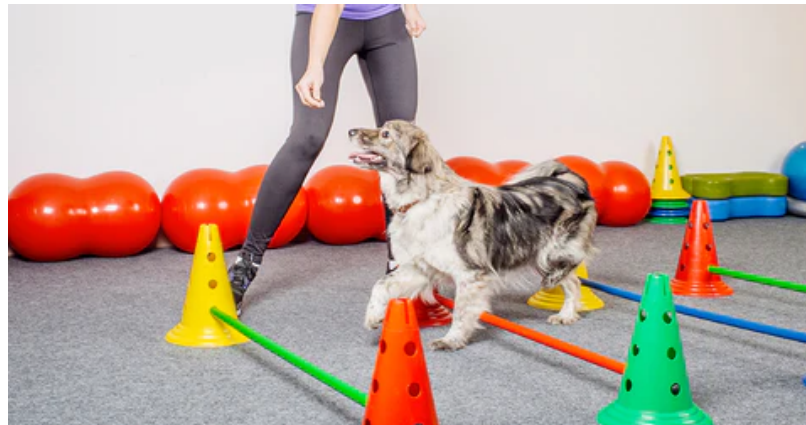
Trainer Vicky Carne of [The Dog Coach Online](#) offers an online [Puppy Home School](#) to prepare pawrents for the real challenges of caring for a puppy. Vicky says that she often hears from her clients that having a puppy is like having a baby, and that's the level responsibility we need to hear about when it comes to pet adoption.





It's fun to scroll through social media and see the fun of having an adorable puppy in your home, but we must remember that puppies are hard work. Just like a baby, puppies need structure throughout the day and night. Getting a puppy to bed is like getting a baby to sleep peacefully through the night: it may happen, but it may not, depending on the circumstances.

Too often, people adopt puppies, thinking it's all fun and games without realizing that they're adopting a sentient being that needs constant loving care and attention. Puppies need proper training so they can grow up with good behavior habits. This doesn't mean that there will never be bad days with training, but it's the best way to ensure smoother sailing with your puppy's behavior.



So, the next time you're scrolling through social media and see the people around you adopting puppies, think about what's happening beyond the screen. It's easy to see a picture of perfection of living life with an adorable puppy, but there are also late nights and early mornings full of new responsibilities.





Keep these tips and advice in mind before bringing a puppy into your life. It's incredibly rewarding to become a pawrent, but if you're not ready for it at the moment, don't adopt out of loneliness. Instead, wait until you're ready so you can give your future pup the best home you can provide. Then, all of the [fun puppy moments](#) will come to you right on time!

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