



Are We Ready for a Pet?

The New-Pet Family Checklist

The happiest pets go to families who choose them thoughtfully. Work through this together **before** you decide — it's the kindest thing you can do for your future pet.

We're ready when we can check every box:

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We know exactly **who will feed, clean up after, and care for** the pet every single day.

We've checked that **no one's allergies** will be a problem.

We have **room at home** for the pet's habitat and for it to move and exercise.

We can afford the **setup cost** (habitat, gear) and the **monthly cost** (food, bedding, supplies).

We've set aside money for **vet care** — including surprise vet bills.

We're ready for the pet's **whole lifespan** (some pets live 15+ years).

We've **researched this exact animal's real needs** — not just how cute it is.

An **adult will supervise** and step in whenever the pet needs it.

Not sure yet? Take the free 1-minute pet-matching quiz at whatpetshouldiget.com to find the animal that truly fits your family.



Before You Bring Your Pet Home

Set up for a calm, happy first day

Getting ready in advance means your new pet walks into a safe, prepared home — not a scramble.

Setup checklist:

- ☐ Read the full **care guide** for your specific pet at whatpetshouldiget.com.
- ☐ Buy and **set up the habitat** (cage, tank, or enclosure) a few days early so it's ready and stable.
- ☐ Get the right **food, bedding, and starter supplies**.
- ☐ Find and **phone a vet** who treats this animal (an exotic or avian vet if it's not a cat or dog).
- ☐ Make a **quiet, safe space** for the pet's first days while it settles in.
- ☐ Agree as a family **who does which daily jobs**.
- ☐ **Check your local laws** — some pets are restricted or banned where you live.
- ☐ **Adopt first:** check local shelters and rescues before buying.



Everyday Care Routine

Print one for the fridge!

A simple rhythm keeps almost any pet healthy and happy. Tick the boxes as you go.

Every day		Every week		Now & then	
☐	Fresh food and clean water	☐	Deep-clean the habitat	☐	Full habitat deep-clean
☐	Quick clean of the habitat / litter	☐	Wash bowls, bottles & bedding	☐	Nail, beak, or coat care as needed
☐	Check the pet looks healthy and active	☐	Check the pet over for changes	☐	Vet check-up
☐	Gentle handling or play (if it enjoys it)	☐	Restock food and supplies	☐	Replace worn gear (wheel, filter, UVB bulb)

This checklist is a friendly guide, not a substitute for a veterinarian. Always check your specific pet's care guide at whatpetshouldiget.com and ask a vet when in doubt. Guided by ASPCA and CDC pet-care guidance.