

## 5 things you should know before: adopting a pet from the Tazewell Animal Protective Society

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By Stephanie Gomes

Kary Robbins, staff member, handles the lab Syrus at the animal shelter. For more information about TAPS, call 353-8277, or visit the Web site at [www.tapsshelter.org](http://www.tapsshelter.org).

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By Stephanie Gomes  
East Peoria Times-Courier  
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East Peoria, Ill. -

**1. Honest Assessment:** *Look at your resources and time. Are you financially prepared to adopt a pet? And if yes, do you have the time to give to meet a pet's needs? The initial adoption fee is the easy part. Both dogs and cats require annual vaccinations and check ups with your veterinarian. As a pet ages, they will need dental care and blood work, ongoing parasites need to be considered and, of course, pets do get sick. At the end of a long day, remember that a pet has been waiting to see you and still needs their walk, brushing and play time.*

**2. Homework:** *There are many breeds of cats and dogs. It is important that you research the activity level,*

grooming requirements and general personality characteristics that the potential pet you are adopting requires. For example, if you are generally a sedentary person with an inactive lifestyle, a high-energy dog may not be a good fit for your family.

**3. Selection:** While there are many pets at the no-kill shelter, you need to have a clear understanding of what type of pet will be best suited to your household. It is easy to become emotional or impulsive and adopt a pet, but for the adoption to be successful, steps one and two should have been completed before you adopt. Please consider that it is traumatic and unhealthy for a pet to be adopted and returned. Also consider age, sex, temperament, social skills, compatibility with other pets.

**4. Time:** Plan to spend some time in selecting, visiting with and adopting a pet. We recommend planning for a couple hours. You are not purchasing an object or new piece of clothing where you give a five-minute look in the mirror and if it fits and looks OK you proceed to purchase. Adopting a pet is a commitment; you are selecting a companion to whom you commit to care for, spend time with and love for the remainder of that pet's natural life. TAPS has an application process and it takes time to look at and visit with a pet to determine who is most compatible with you and your family.

**5. Be Realistic:** After looking at the above steps, now may not be the right time to adopt. Consider becoming a volunteer or fostering a pet instead. It may take time to find a pet that is best suited to your needs and lifestyle. Please visit frequently; adoption is a process. Ask questions and look into resources provided to make an educated decision about adoption. Prepare your home and family for a new pet's arrival.

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Great story. We have gotten all our pets from TAPS. There are many to choose from so sometimes it's hard to decide.

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