

## Is This The Best Time to Adopt A Pet?

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Pets add fun, companionship and love to our lives, but they're also a big responsibility. Choosing to add a pet to your family is a very important decision. Sometimes, adopting a pet may be too much added responsibility if you're experiencing other life-changes at the same time. 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 past six months, or that you think may occur in the coming six months:

- Divorce or end of a relationship
- Marriage
- Change in living arrangements (new roommates or moving in with significant other)
- Move to a new residence
- Pregnancy or new baby
- Longer hours or increased responsibility at work
- Financial concerns
- Children leaving home or moving back home
- Care-taking responsibilities for elderly or ill family member
- Significant changes in family routine
- Death of a family member
- Death or disappearance of a family pet
- Relinquishment of a pet (given away or brought to an animal shelter)
- Significant health problems of a family member
- Change in working status of yourself or a family member (begins work, changes jobs or retires)
- Frequent travel, either for business or pleasure
- Limited leisure or free time
- Graduation from high school or college
- Disagreement among family members about adopting a pet
- Add one point for every pet you currently have (one aquarium counts as one pet).

### SCORING

- 0-3:** Your life seems fairly stable. Now is probably a reasonable time to adopt a pet.
- 4-6:** You have a lot of responsibilities right now. Although adopting a pet may still work for you, a small mammal, an adult cat or well-trained adult dog would probably be more appropriate than a kitten, a puppy or an active breed of dog.
- 7-10:** Let's think twice about this. With all the changes and responsibilities in your life right now, you may not have the time to care for a new pet. It would probably be better for both you and the pet if you wait until your life settles down a bit.
- 10+:** Adopting a pet is not a wise decision for your lifestyle at this point in time. Why not consider a pet rock or "computer pet" instead? Only until things settle down a bit; then review again!