

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

Pets add fun, companionship and love to our lives, but they are also a big responsibility. Choosing to add a pet to your family is an 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 a 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 a family member (begins work, changes jobs, quits or retires)
- Frequent travel, either for business or pleasure
- Limited leisure or free time
- 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 is fairly stable. Now is probably a reasonable time to acquire 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 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+** **STOP!** Acquiring a pet now is not a wise decision. With so much going on, adding a pet to your household will increase your stress level and be an extra burden. This wouldn't be fair to you or your new pet. We suggest re-assessing your situation in another six months to see if it would be a more appropriate time.