



10 Topics for Educating New Adopters

1. **Basic Care: food, shelter, annual vet checkup/vaccinations, identification tags, time, safety (i.e., fenced yard)**
2. **Cost per year of owning a pet: food, vet care, training, collars/leashes**
3. **Household items and hazards that could harm pets:**
 - Dogs - chocolate, antifreeze, lawn pesticides can be deadly
 - Cats - crawling into tiny spaces or clothes dryers, eating certain house plants, antifreeze, lawn pesticides can be deadly
4. **Plan for vacation and emergencies: keep the veterinarian's phone number handy, have the name/number of a family member or neighbor to contact, and use a reputable kennel or pet sitter.**
5. **Expected life span of cats and dogs -**
 - Outdoor cats = 2 years/Indoor cats = 18-20 years
 - Small dogs = 12-15 years/Large dogs = 8-10 years
6. **What to expect from a kitten or puppy -**
 - Kittens - lots of scratching, both you and furniture; lots of energy; need for lots of attention
 - Puppies - teething, chewing, accidents while being housebroken, lots of energy, need for lots of attention
7. **Advantages of adopting older animals - most already housebroken and teething stage is over**
8. **Advantages of spay/neuter by 4 months of age - no unexpected litters...**
9. **Pets should be a member of the family; they need to interact and be included in family activities. Schedule daily playtime and regular exercise with your pets.**
10. **Educating children how to interact with pets: be gentle, learn how to hold, never squeeze, don't pull tail or ears, never try to take food away from a dog**