

Using the Internet to Adopt a Pet

Some people are dog people. Some people are cat people. Others may be rabbit, hamster, fish, parrot or iguana people. Pets may great companions, and there are as many different kinds of companions as there are people who adore them. Whatever your particular taste, when shopping for a new pet, consider adopting an animal from a shelter as an alternative to high priced pet stores. One convenient way to do this is to use a website like PetFinder.com. The selection is fantastic, and you can search without having to leave the house!

An advantage to beginning the pet search online is the powerful search tools at your disposal. At PetFinder.com, for instance, a search function allows users to narrow down animals based on breed, age, size, gender, and range (i.e., how far the animal is from the person searching). Looking for a female Shih Tzu near Montclair, NJ? There are well over 100 listings on PetFinder.

Over 200,000 animals are listed at any given time, all easily searchable and most with pictures. You're not limited to just dog, cats, and the occasional hamster, either. Sites like PetFinder have listings for all types of animals, from pigs to snakes and alpacas to sugar gliders. Simply specify the type of animal you're after in the search box, and watch how many results you get. Need a gecko near Castle Rock, CO? Done and done.

Many people hear the term "pet adoption" and think that only adult animals can be adopted. Perhaps you're hesitant to adopt an adult animal. After all, part of the experience of owning a pet is raising and training it as your own. But while puppies and kittens are awfully cute, they are also a handful. They require a lot of work, training and patience. They have more energy than you may have ever though possible, and they are in constant need of attention. For some, the joy of a baby animal is worth enduring these difficulties. For those who want an animal but not the aggravation, mature pets are the way to go. A lot of the animals on pet adoption websites are from shelters, so there are plenty of adults available...but there are also plenty of adorable puppies and kittens who need homes, too. Whichever is your preference, you will be able to find it online.

Once you've narrowed down your search, you can start looking at listings. A lot of information, including picture previews, is available right from the listing summary. The animal's location, breed, general age, gender and name are listed right on the results page. There are also icons that give any special housing needs, such as for animals who need to be in a home without small children or other animals. When you see an animal you like, click on its name to read more about it. From there, it's just a matter of a phone call or e-mail to initiate

the eventual process of adoption.

Adopting a pet is a great option as an alternative to pet store animals. The Internet can make the process easier by making the search simpler and more convenient. To see examples of such sites, or to begin your own pet search, visit PetFinder.com or 1-800-Save-a-Pet.com.