



Zoos and aquariums get calls daily from people desperate to find homes for exotic animals they can no longer care for. Since we can't take them, we hope you'll think twice before acquiring an exotic pet.

Make a smart pet choice; adopt from a local shelter. Visit Petfinder.com to find animals that need homes in your area.

Smart Pet Choices is a project of the
NW ZOO & AQUARIUM ALLIANCE
PROMOTING REGIONAL CONSERVATION

More information: www.nwzaa.org/pets

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Smart Pet Choices

Responsible pet selection and care





Before you select a pet, find out about:

- **Health risks**

Animals may have contagious diseases...or big teeth!
Make sure the animal is safe for you and your family.

- **Food for thought**

What are the animal's dietary, housing and social needs? Do you expect a snake to cuddle with you?
Make sure you can meet one another's expectations!

- **Are you ready for a long term commitment?**

Will this relationship last 15 years? 30 years? Check the animal's life span. Zoos and aquariums can't take unwanted animals, and shelters are full of homeless pets. It's cruel to release a pet into the wild and harmful to wildlife.

- **Can you get in trouble?**

Find out if your animal is legal to own or if it requires a permit. Check local, state and federal laws to avoid liability issues and fines.

- **Check the pet vet**

Is there a vet in your area who will care for your animal? Expensive veterinary care can be a bitter pill to swallow.

- **After you've done your homework...**

Check that your animal comes from a responsible and legal source. Remember that collecting animals from the wild is a big no-no.