



Is Some Bunny Right 4 You?



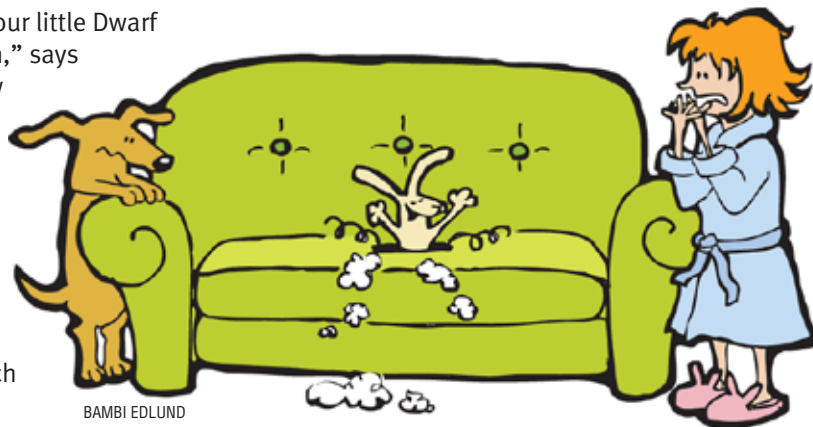
Rabbits make wonderful pets... for some families! If you want to pick up and cuddle an animal, then a rabbit probably isn't right for you. Rabbits are calm, sweet and affectionate but prefer to just hang out close to you and usually don't like to be held or picked up.

Rabbits are also a long-term commitment – they live eight to 12 years! They are, however, very clean and can be trained to use a litter box. Buns are active creatures so you can't just keep them in a cage. Each day they need a few hours outside their habitat so they can explore, dig, chew, hide and run around.

Watch out! Even when provided with chew toys, rabbits will still chew corners of couches, table legs, baseboards, doorframes, plants, rug ends and electrical cords in an effort to keep their constantly growing front teeth worn down. That's why bunny guardians must "rabbit-proof" their homes. Just ask rabbit mom Tiffany Oldford.

"My husband and I enjoy watching television while our little Dwarf rabbit Beatrice gets her daily exercise in the TV room," says Tiffany. "She used to disappear and hide out of view under the couch. We never thought anything of it until one night, to our surprise little Beatrice's head popped right out of the couch!"

Tiffany discovered that Beatrice wasn't *hiding* but slowly chewing away at the couch frame. "Now my husband affectionately refers to her as Beatrice, the couch destroyer," says Tiffany. "We love her dearly and would never give her up but now we watch her a lot more closely!"

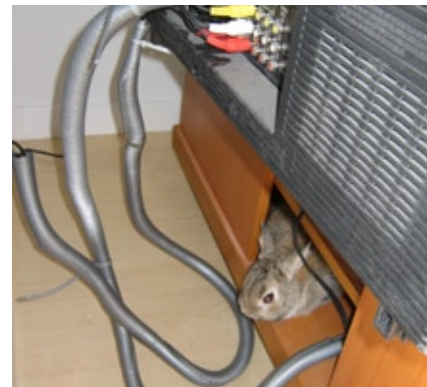


BAMBI EDLUND

Before your family adopts a rabbit ask yourselves these questions:

- Do you watch a lot of television or sit at the computer every night?
- Are you very particular about your home and the way it is kept?
- Are you impatient and go from task to task?
- Are you very active and out of the house a lot?
- Are you looking for a cuddly lap pet?
- Is your home very busy with family members often coming and going?

If you answered no to the majority of these questions, a rabbit may be right for your family. But remember, before you hop out and adopt a rabbit, do your research about their care, fully rabbit-proof your home and be prepared if the rabbit ends up chewing a piece of your furniture!



Steps to Adopting at the SPCA

Adopting an animal at the SPCA is pretty easy. Shelter staff and volunteers will help you find the best match for your lifestyle. This means they will need to know a lot about you and your family. Then they help you find the perfect cat, dog, rabbit, guinea pig, horse or other companion you are looking for.

1. You may want to begin your animal search online at www.sPCA.bc.ca. All BC SPCA animals are listed – most with pictures – from all our shelters in the province. Online are also many animals that are being temporarily fostered



by people because they may be too young to be in the shelter, need special care, or there isn't enough space.

3. Bring the whole family. Shelter staff will ask that your whole family be part of the adoption so everyone has a chance to meet the new family member. If your family already has a dog, the shelter will want the dogs to meet before they finalize the adoption – so bring your pooch!

4. You will have to fill out an adoption form at the shelter and staff will ask you questions to make sure you will be the perfect forever home. Things such as whether anyone in your family has allergies, whether you have a veterinarian, where the pet

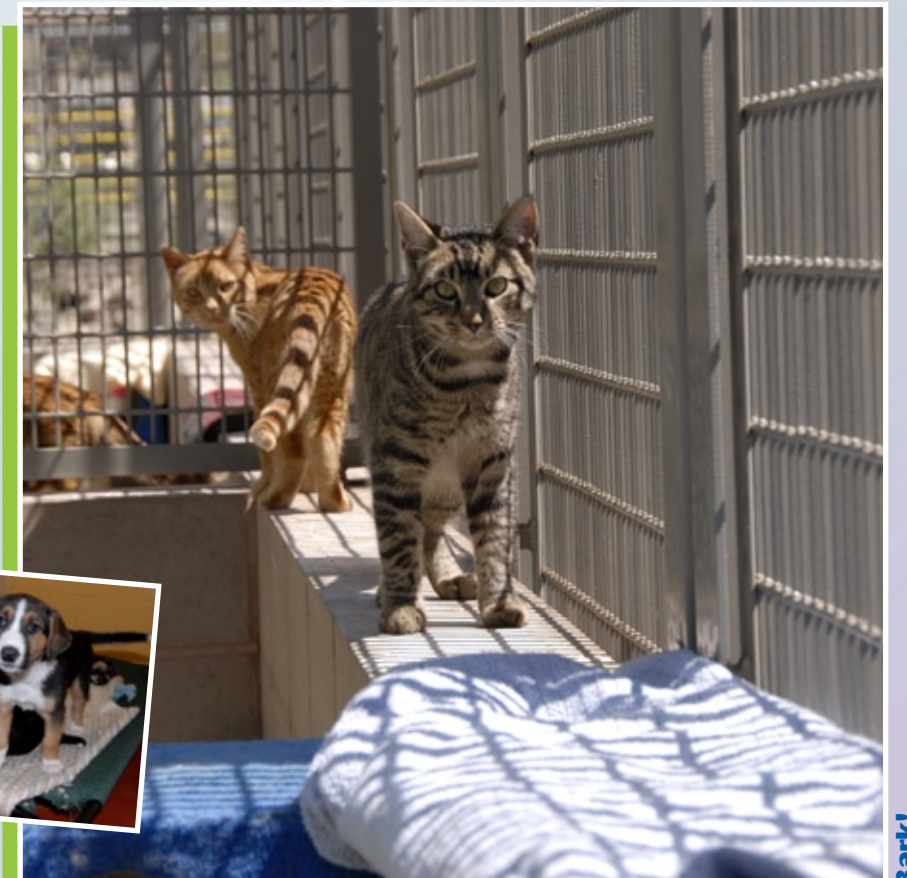
will stay during the day – inside or outside (we strongly prefer cats and dogs are kept indoors!), what your plan for your pet is when you go on holidays, and whether you have a landlord's permission if you rent your home.

5. Once you have been approved by shelter staff, you will be able to take your new pet home!



Georgia's newly adopted kitty, ?????

2. Visit the shelter to view the animals. For cats, you'll meet individual cats in cages and cats in rooms with other cats called communal cat rooms. Dogs are usually in kennels and most shelters have a "get acquainted" room for you to spend some quiet time with the dogs. Rabbits and other small animals are normally in a separate area or room and there are always lots to choose from!





Second Chances

The BC SPCA finds forever homes for more than 3,000 dogs and puppies each year. Every rescued animal's story is special in its own way. Here are four "tails" of dogs who have gotten a second chance.

"It's just life"

Evie's previous guardians bought her online. It wasn't until they brought her home that they found out she was deaf – and chose to surrender her to the SPCA.

What started out as a sad situation ended up a happy one for Evie. Her stay at the shelter meant the chance to meet her new guardians, Marisa and Desmond, who were not only willing to adopt a deaf dog, but excited about it. They have family members who are deaf and they know sign language. In their first few months together, Evie learned 15 signs. She knows sit, lay down, stay, walk and more!

While some might consider a lack of hearing a problem, Evie's guardians see it differently – for their dog or any other. Marisa says, "It's not a disability for them, it's just life, and they relish it like any other dog."



Left: Border, a fearful border collie. Above: Border thriving in his new home.



"He just blossomed"

Surrendered to the Kelowna SPCA as a puppy for being "too active," Border the border collie was underweight, fearful and showing signs of extreme boredom. He went straight into foster care with David and Bridgette, a family experienced with border collies, a breed known for being high-energy and intelligent.

After some adjustment and confidence-building (at first he was afraid to even bark), Border was entered into an agility competition. He was both excited and focused in the agility ring – surely thanks to the caring patience of his foster parents. The Kelowna SPCA's branch manager noticed Border's improvement since joining David and Bridgette, saying that "he just blossomed in their care."

And Border continues to blossom: from foster home to forever home, he found his permanent family with David, Bridgette and his "sister," a fellow border collie.



Left: Emaciated Cedric. Below: Cedric recovering by the fire with his new pals.

"He wags his tail constantly"

Cedric got his second chance after being brought to the Vancouver SPCA. The two-year-old boxer weighed less than half of what he should and needed surgery to remove a deflated soccer ball from his intestines. He immediately went into a foster home where he could receive round-the-clock care and start on the road to recovery.

Because he hadn't had food in so long, Cedric needed to start eating slowly. His foster mom, Jodi, fed him a tablespoon of food every two hours and monitored his weight gain with the help of a nutritionist.

As Cedric's body has recovered, so has his spirit. Jodi calls him "loving and cuddly," adding that his personality shines through more each day and that "he wags his tail constantly."

As soon as he's all better, Cedric will officially be adopted into a forever home. We're sure he'll be wagging his tail lots on adoption day!



"No more chains"

Before Handsome arrived at the BC SPCA last winter, he'd been living outside on a chain, surrounded by snow and ice. His water bucket had frozen over and his thin wooden dog house didn't provide any comfort or warmth. Handsome was desperately thin, shaking from the cold, and some of his teeth were worn down to the gums from chewing on his chain.

Left: Handsome, the day he was brought to the BC SPCA. Far right: Handsome excited to go home with his new guardians.

Despite his terrible experience, Handsome quickly showed everyone at the shelter his sweet personality. They called the mastiff "a big teddy bear" who "loves everyone and everything."

Once fully recovered, Handsome was placed for adoption. It didn't take long to find his perfect match. Handsome's new guardians, Pat and Nolan, have a big, fenced backyard for running – and a nice, warm home to be a part of the family.

"No more chains," Pat says. "From now on, it's all belly rubs."



DON'T SHOP.. ADOPT!

Hey, Kat! We're heading to the pet store to buy a rabbit. Want to come along?

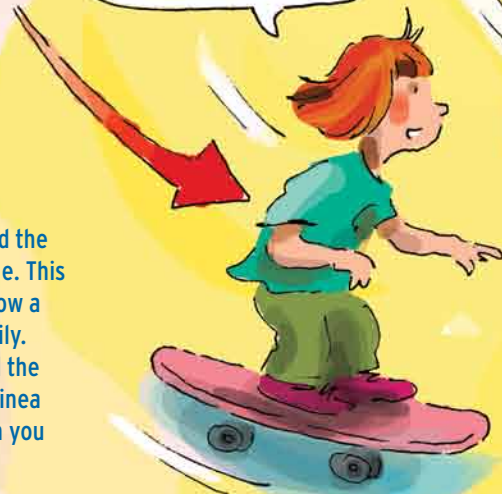


Uh, Fin? Shelters have lots of homeless rabbits. You should adopt instead.



BC SPCA shelters are filled with unwanted animals, including rabbits and other small animals such as guinea pigs, gerbils and hamsters. There is no need to buy one from a pet store! Make the BC SPCA your first adoption option instead.

Adopting is easy, Fin. I'll show you.



Adopt? Sounds complicated.



Not sure what adoption is all about? Shelter staff and volunteers will help you find the best match for your lifestyle. This means they will need to know a lot about you and your family. Then they will help you find the perfect cat, dog, rabbit, guinea pig, rat or other companion you are looking for.

Step 5: Once you have been approved, you will be asked to pay the adoption fee. Prices vary depending on the type of animal. Staff will also answer any care questions you have. The BC SPCA website - spca.bc.ca - has more detailed care information. Then you will be able to take your new pet home!



You're right, Kat! Adopting was easy.

And bonus, Fin - your new pets are already fixed!



Since there are already so many unwanted animals, the BC SPCA ensures all dogs, cats and rabbits are spayed or neutered as part of the adoption.

Hey, these two rabbits sound perfect.



A bonded pair. So cute!

Step 4: Fill out an adoption form. The staff will ask you a few questions such as: Does anyone in your family have allergies? Do you have a veterinarian? Does the building where you live allow you to have pets? This may seem like a lot of information, but staff just wants to make sure you will be the perfect forever home.

Just fill out the adoption application. Once approved, you'll get to take them home!



They're so friendly. What's next, Kat?

Step 3: Ideally, bring the whole family so that everyone has a chance to meet the new family member. Getting a pet is a family decision and a family responsibility. If your family wants to adopt a dog, but you already have one at home, the shelter will want the two dogs to meet before they finalize the adoption - so bring your pooch!

Step 2: Visit the shelter to view the animals. For cats, you will meet individual cats in cages and groups of cats in rooms called communal cat rooms. Dogs are usually in kennels. Most shelters have a special "get acquainted" room for you to spend some quiet time with a dog you are interested in. Rabbits and other small animals are normally in a separate area. There are lots to choose from!

Step 1: You can begin your search for a new companion right at home! Check out spca.bc.ca/adoptme to see all of the animals available for adoption at BC SPCA shelters across the province. Each animal will have a profile page. Most profiles have a picture and a short description to let you know a bit about the animal.

