

Prepare!!!!

You think you want a parrot... but have you done your homework? If you've only watched online videos showing adorable, cute, vocal, practically human birds, you're in for a shock.

Parrots are not feathered humans, dogs, or cats. They are wild creatures meant to live and fly freely in their natural habitats. Also, baby parrots are different from mature parrots who are ruled by their hormones - which works fine in nature but not in a cage or in a human home.

If you're convinced a parrot is the right companion - not "pet" - for you, ask yourself these defining questions:

- For what bird, if any, am I the right person, given my own strengths and weaknesses, my own likes and dislikes?
- How much time can and will I spend with a parrot?
- Who do I know, willing to help me or take on my parrot in a short-term emergency or even a longer period of time?

Once you've been honest with yourself and made real life plans to address and commit to in caring for a parrot, now consider some important DON'Ts and DOs to choose the right parrot for you and be the right person for that parrot.



How do I choose the right bird for me ?



THE DON'T's

- **Don't Fall for the Fallacy of the "Starter" Bird**

Some people suggest starting with a small, less expensive parrot - budgie, lovebird, cockatiel - to get bird experience before moving on to an Amazon or a macaw. Wrong! Your first bird deserves a caretaker who understands its needs; it is not a temporary substitute nor is it okay to make mistakes, as though the bird is a learning tool. A little parrot, full of personality, is a 15 year commitment requiring proper care to ensure its health and happiness.

- **Don't Fall for Fancy Feathers**

Parrots are gorgeous creatures of nature. They are not objects; they are social and family-oriented, who bond deeply and emotionally. Don't buy a parrot to match your sofa; instead put up wallpaper that features birds! Don't get a parrot to entertain you; it's not a TV or laptop you can turn off. Parrots may talk but for sure they will scream, and they don't obey commands to be quiet. A safer bet is to watch birds on your laptop and adjust the volume!

- **Don't Worry Too Much about Age**

As long as you're realistic and prepare for your parrot to possibly outlive you, your main concern is to ensure your bird's happy, healthy life. It's often a better alternative to adopt an older bird, who may have outlived one owner or needs a home where love and care are priorities.

- **Don't Generalize about any one Species**

Every parrot is an individual, who will conform to many species characteristics but will surprise you with its own personality - a combination of nature and nurture. That's why you need to get to know a parrot you're considering and give it time to consider you too. The parrot will definitely let you know if a bond is instantaneous, possible, or a definite no.

- **Don't Ignore Costs beyond Price**

Parrots aren't cheap and neither are the items you'll need to make life stimulating, safe, and happy. Cages - made of the best material and the right size - can cost more than the bird. Toys and perches provide exercise and stimulation. A carrier is necessary to go to the veterinarian and the groomer. Birds need a healthy, varied diet (not bags of commercial seed) as well as air filters and full spectrum lighting. And remember to put aside some money to replace the furniture and other items that might be chomped on, even by a little beak.

consider ADOPTING

Older Parrots need Second Chances....

...or third, fourth, or fifth chances. A great owner may die or a frazzled owner may be done with a parrot whose raging hormones rule the roost. Adopting a parrot who has been brought back to good health and positive social behavior is a gift to a needy bird and can be very rewarding to you.

Best Source

Stay away from the Internet where photos of black marketed, smuggled, or bird-flipped parrots attract naïve people with good hearts. Instead, adopt from a reputable rehoming organization or a rescue or haven that rehabilitates parrots and prepares them for forever homes. These organizations will also have health records and certificates as well as some history of a parrot's prior homes. Safest for the adopted parrot, if something happens and you can't keep the bird, a reputable rescue/haven will take the bird back.

The Best of Circumstances

An adoption process usually takes several weeks if not a few months to complete. Rescue/jhavens want to make sure that you are thoroughly educated about the specific parrot you bond with - both its individual habits and its species traits, trained to handle the parrot, know the best diet, watch how it is groomed, and be informed about appropriate caging, toys, and basic health care. Every parrot deserves a forever home.



THE DO's

- **Do Consider Noise**

Calling, singing, and screaming are all natural parrot behaviors - another reason to do your homework and visit often with any bird you consider. Some parrot vocalizations are high-pitched while others are just plain loud. Determine what you can tolerate, and also keep in mind family members, friends, and neighbors!

- **Do Think about Beaks and Biting**

Bites are not only possible but probable. A nip may not draw blood but can be painful. Blood is not the only sign of serious damage! A parrot may cuddle with you and then bite if it gets jealous, fearful, or doesn't get enough attention. Often, children and parrots are not a good combination. On the other hand, birds use their beaks to stabilize moving along a perch or your arm. Know your parrot and its body language!

- **Do Consider Size**

Little and big parrots need positive attention, a healthy diet, an enriched environment, and veterinary care. But the bigger parrots' demands can make a relationship harder to accommodate.

- **Do Thoroughly Research Breeders, Vendors, and Pet Stores before Purchasing**

The best of circumstances is a chick raised by its parents with plenty of early human socialization. Unfortunately, most parrots are "factory" or commercially raised with little exposure to humans. Breeders vary from doing it as a business to doing it because they truly love birds. Find the best source for your parrot baby or adult. You will need resources!

LAST BUT MOST IMPORTANT POINT



The answer to "How do I Choose The Right Bird" is that you don't. You learn and you search until you meet the bird who chooses you!