Animal Shelter Adoption Analysis

Adoption, Returns, and the Preventable

Behind the shelter doors lies a cycle of hope, loss, and difficult outcomes. The data shows the scale of the challenge shelters and rescues face each year.



Millions enter the shelter system every year 1



6.5 million Pets enter U.S. shelters each year.





Adoptions give millions a home, but some don't last...



Shelter animals are adopted each year

An estimated 450,000 are returned...³

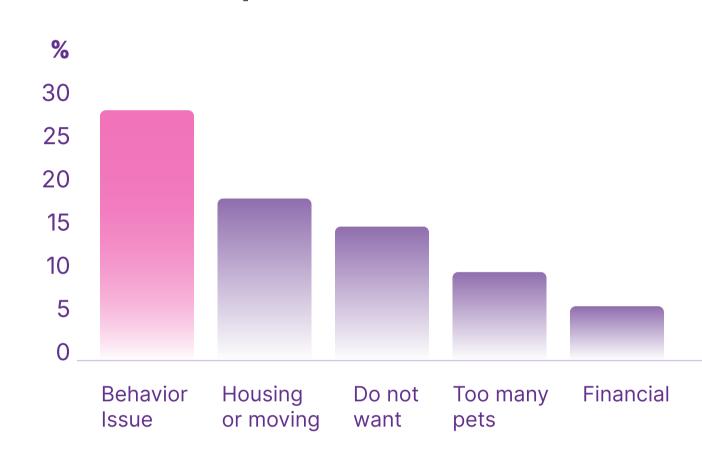


return rate return rate for dogs for cats

A significant number of animals are brought back mainly due to behavioral problems and lifestyle mismatch.

Top Reasons for Relinquishment 4

Overall relinquishment reasons



Behavior relinquishment reasons



The preventable tragedy 4

Hundreds of thousands of adoptable pets are euthanized annually.



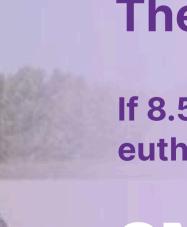
Pets bought from stores, breeders, and puppy mills 5

Adoptable pets are euthanized while millions of others are bought each year.





of owners get their cat from a breeder



The power of a small shift can end euthanasia

If 8.5 percent of dog buyers adopted instead, shelters could end dog euthanasia.6

Dogs from

breeders

2M + 2.6M / 390k

breeders

Dogs from dogs euthanized annually

You can make an impact, save a life, and help end the cycle of abandonment.

#AdoptDontShop @getbuddy.com

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This infographic was developed by **GetBuddy** using data from the following sources: ^{1.}Shelter Animals Count 2023

².Pet Radar: US Animal Shelter Facts & Statistics 2025 ^{3.}Nature.com Report: Characterizing Unsuccessful Animal Adoptions

⁵. ASPCA 2019

⁶.getbuddy.com

⁴ Study: Investigating the Reasons behind Companion Animal Relinquishment, University of CO