

# How to: Adopt a pet

Find your perfect (animal) companion—and save a life—without stepping foot into a pet store. **By Jennifer Abbasi**

Before you succumb to the charms of the frolicking puppies in your local pet-store window, consider this: Last year, more than 20,000 homeless cats and dogs were put to sleep in NYC because no one adopted them. And no, they didn't come to an early end because of bad behavior. "Most just got a unlucky break in life," explains Jane Hoffman, president of the Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals, which partners with more than 100 of the city's shelters and rescue groups. "From small to large dogs, active cats to couch potatoes—we've got 'em." And it's a good deal, too. Adoption rates range from around \$100 to \$200 for dogs, and \$25 for cats (puppies and kittens may cost more). That fee covers up-to-date vet care, spaying/neutering and vaccinations.

## **Animal Care & Control**

Contracted by the city to accept all animals, AC&C must euthanize to make room: "If someone brought us a lion, we'd have to take him," says Manhattan-location manager Pedro Rosario. Menagerie though it may be, adoptions are limited to cats, dogs and bunnies. If you're looking for a pit bull—one of the most intelligent breeds—come here. More "desirable" pets are often sent to one of the other groups. *326 E 110th St between First and Second Aves; 2336 Linden Blvd between Essex St and Shepherd Ave, Ozone Park, Brooklyn; 3139 Veterans Rd West between Arthur Kill Rd and North Bridge St, Staten Island (212-788-4000 for all)*

## **Animal Haven**

With its high ceiling and exposed-brick and wood furnishings, the brand-new Soho branch feels more retail than shelter. But fear not—all proceeds from the chic sweaters and cute carriers on display benefit the cats and dogs hanging out. Upstairs you'll find an animal meet-and-greet lounge, complete with comfy couches and a flat-screen TV, a bathroom sponsored by Fetch restaurant and the city's largest training room, which you can rent for events. *251 Centre St between Broome and Grand Sts (212-274-8511); 35-22 Prince St between Northern Blvd and 35th Ave, Flushing, Queens (718-886-3683)*

## **American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**

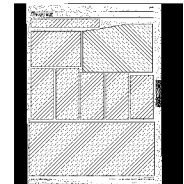
Top-of-the-line accommodations—clean design, smart plumbing, and special noise- and odor-blocking building materials—make this the five-star hotel of shelters. You won't see any cages here. Felines hang out in comfy "cat colonies" in the front windows; dogs chill out in small rooms with glass fronts. Make it your first stop if you're looking for a toy dog: I spied a Chihuahua, a poodle, a Maltese and a shih tzu. *424 E 92nd St between First and York Aves (212-876-7700)*

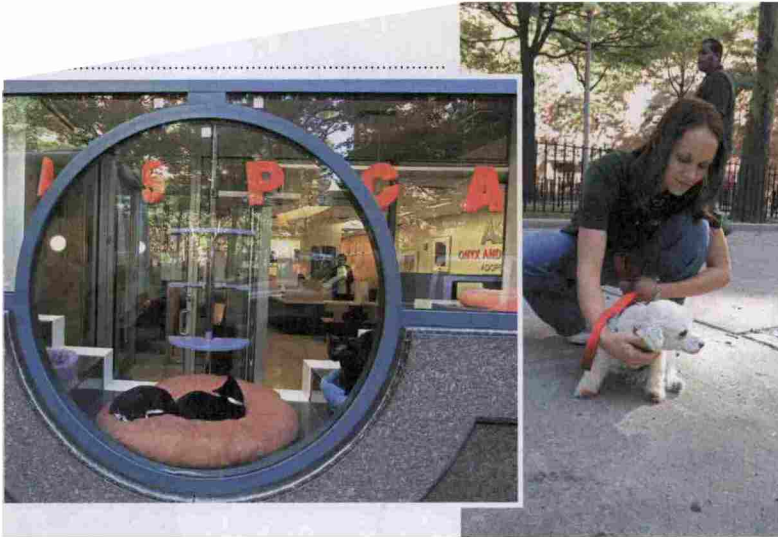
## **Humane Society of New York**

Murals of animal alums adorn the lobby, welcoming you to the homiest of the shelters. Warmhearted Bonnie Tischler gives all potential adopters a personal interview to ensure the perfect match. Cats are on display, but dogs that fit your wish list and lifestyle are brought to you, so your first impression is interacting with them. A rooftop run keeps dogs agile, and the guy who has trained Sandy from the musical *Annie* provides "behavior" cases with lifelong consultations. *306 E 59th St between First and Second Aves (212-752-4842)*

## **Bideawee**

The name means "stay a while" in Scottish, but the staff works hard to make it only a pit stop for its furry friends. Newly built cat "resorts" in the front window bring potential adopters off the street, and free "Fitness with Fido" Saturday group walks give alums and owners exercise and visibility to adoptable animals. *410 E 38th St between First Ave and FDR Dr (212-532-4455); 3300 Beltagh Ave at Wantagh Ave, Wantagh, LI (516-785-4079); 118 Old Country Rd, Westhampton, LI (631-325-0200)*





## Please take us home!



**Animal Care & Control**  
 Seven-year-old **Nickles** is an "especially calm," kid- and dog-friendly Labrador mix with a beautiful soft yellow coat. He's loyal, full of spirit and eager for a great home!



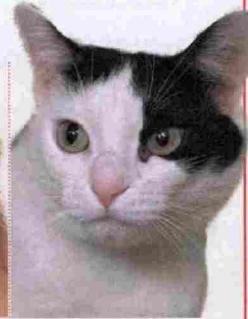
**Animal Haven**  
 These four-year-old Chihuahua mixes, **Snoopie** and **Skippie**, are inseparable twin brothers. They're super-active and great for a family—they love kids.



**ASPCA**  
 Low-key **Boysenberry** is a three-year-old who craves a mellow home. While he has Feline Immunodeficiency Virus, it's not transmittable to people, and he can still live a long, healthy life.



**Humane Society of New York**  
 Purebred Pomeranian **Charlotte** is a beautiful, sweet eight-year-old, happiest with adults and no other pets. She's blind—but once she learns her new home, you'd never know it.



**Bideawee**  
**Pachichas** (a.k.a. Patchies) is a family-friendly, Brooklyn-born, sweet and mellow three-year-old who loves other cats.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (TOP) WEIYI HUANG