

Your shelter-visit checklist

Make your adoption conversation useful: ask about daily life, care records, introductions, costs and support, then leave with a clear next step.

Organization

Date / animal

Before you go

- ☐ Confirm availability, meeting location and appointment arrangements.
- ☐ Check required documents, who should attend and the resident-pet policy.
- ☐ Note your household routine, needs and questions to discuss.

Learn about this animal's daily life

- ☐ What history and behavior have been observed, and in which setting?
- ☐ What food, meal times, rest and toilet routine are familiar?
- ☐ What handling, household interactions and support needs should we discuss?

Get care information you can take home

- ☐ Request copies of veterinary records and current care instructions.
- ☐ Ask about ongoing treatment, dietary needs and planned follow-up.
- ☐ Confirm fee inclusions and how microchip registration will be updated.

Plan the meeting and the journey home

- ☐ Follow the team's instructions for meeting and handling the animal.
- ☐ Ask how introductions to resident pets should be arranged.
- ☐ Confirm transport, collection, the prepared resting space and first-night plan.

Leave with a clear next step

- ☐ Collect the adoption agreement, care paperwork and support contact.
- ☐ Ask what to do if settling in is difficult or adoption cannot continue.
- ☐ List unanswered questions, who will follow up and your next action.

Notes & follow-up

Contact person / next step

Current guide and sources

<https://whereanimalsshine.com/guides/questions-to-ask-a-shelter>

Guide updated September 27, 2026