



Parrot Ownership Checklist: Are You Ready for a Bird? 🦜 ✅

Parrots are intelligent, social, and long-lived companions—but they require **time, patience, and a lifetime commitment**. Before bringing one into your home, review this **checklist** to ensure you're fully prepared!

1. Commitment & Lifestyle Considerations

- Lifespan** – Many parrots live **20–80+ years** (Are you ready for a lifelong commitment?)
 - Time Requirement** – Parrots need **at least 3–4 hours** of daily interaction outside the cage.
 - Noise Level** – Can you handle loud squawking, especially in the morning/evening? (Some species are noisier than others.)
 - Mess Factor** – Birds drop food, shed feathers, and require **daily cage cleaning**.
 - Allergies & Sensitivities** – Some people are allergic to bird dander; birds are sensitive to smoke, perfumes, and aerosols.
 - Travel Plans** – Birds need **consistent care**; do you have a plan for vacations?
 - Rental & Housing Restrictions** – Many apartments have **pet policies** that restrict birds.
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2. Family & Kids Considerations

- Supervision Required** – Birds can be fragile and don't always tolerate rough handling.
 - Biting & Behavioral Challenges** – Even trained parrots **may bite**, especially if frightened.
 - Allergies in Children** – Bird dander, seeds, and dust can trigger allergies.
 - Time for Training** – Birds require **positive reinforcement training** to avoid bad habits.
 - Parrots Need Routine** – Are your kids prepared to be **gentle, patient, and consistent** with the bird?
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3. Space & Environment

- Cage Size** – Each species requires a **spacious cage** with room to spread wings and climb.
 - Safety Proofing** – Birds chew **furniture, wires, toxic plants**, and household items.
 - Temperature & Air Quality** – No drafts, strong fumes, or non-stick cookware (Teflon fumes are deadly).
 - Perches & Enrichment** – Variety of **perches, toys, and climbing opportunities** needed for stimulation.
 - Quiet & Active Zones** – Birds need a **calm place to sleep** but also love being near family activity.
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4. Diet & Nutrition

- Species-Specific Diet** – Avoid all-seed diets; parrots need **pellets, fresh veggies, and fruits**.
- Daily Fresh Food Prep** – Birds need **chopped fresh foods** daily (can you commit to this?).

The Avian Conservation Institute in conjunction with www.beaknwings.org

- No Toxic Foods** – Avocado, chocolate, caffeine, alcohol, onion, garlic, and salty foods are deadly.
 - Water Changes** – Fresh water must be provided **daily**.
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5. Veterinary Care & Costs

- Exotic Vet Required** – Not all vets treat birds; find a **certified avian vet nearby**.
 - Annual Checkups** – Birds hide illness well; routine exams are necessary.
 - Emergency Costs** – Vet care for parrots can be **expensive** (do you have a budget for emergencies?).
 - Grooming Needs** – Nail trimming and occasional wing clipping (if needed) should be done professionally.
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6. Social & Emotional Needs

- Parrots Need Socialization** – They bond with their **human flock** and need daily interaction.
 - Mental Stimulation** – Bored parrots develop **feather plucking, screaming, and aggression**.
 - Talking & Mimicry** – Not all parrots talk, but they **learn words and sounds** through repetition.
 - Trust Takes Time** – Some birds take **weeks or months** to bond with their owners.
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7. Financial Responsibility 💰

- Cage & Accessories** – A proper setup can cost **\$200–\$1,000+** depending on size/species.
 - Vet Care** – Annual and emergency visits can cost **\$100–\$500+** per visit.
 - Quality Diet** – Fresh foods, pellets, and treats cost **\$30–\$100+ per month**.
 - Toys & Enrichment** – Birds **destroy toys** as part of play; you'll need to replace them **regularly**.
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Final Question: Are You Ready?

Parrots can make **amazing, intelligent companions**, but they require a **huge commitment**. If you answered **YES** to all these questions and are fully prepared, a parrot might be a great fit for your family!

If you're unsure, **consider volunteering at a bird rescue** or fostering first before committing.

Still have questions? Contact Beak N Wings or visit www.beaknwings.org for expert guidance!
