

# *Downers Grove Animal Hospital & Bird Clinic, P.C.*

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## **Picking a pet bird**

When selecting a pet bird, choose one that is right for your situation. Impulse buying of pet birds can lead to problems.

### **Important considerations include:**

- Space requirements
- Amount of care required
- Life span
- Cost
- Whether or not it was hand fed
- Noisiness
- Age
- Sex

Most captive-bred birds are now hand-fed. This practice results in much tamer and better-adjusted pets. Hand-fed youngsters are often 2-5 times more expensive than wild-caught imported birds of the same species. Not all hand-fed birds are equal. Young birds which are simply fed and then left isolated until the next feeding are not as human-friendly as birds which get lavished with extra attention between and at meal times.

Younger birds are easier to tame and train. They may also come with a health agreement or guarantee, which the mature bird usually does not. For most common breeds of cage birds (Budgies, Cockatiels), it is best to get a bird which is 2-3 months old.

In many species there is marked difference between the temperaments of males and females. Male budgies are sometimes better talkers and less aggressive than females of this species. If you are interested in a singing canary, you will want to purchase a male. Female cockatiels are thought to be less aggressive than their male counterparts. Also female birds often lay eggs even in the absence of a male, which can lead to health problems, if excessive.

Certain species of birds are more likely to be noisy, aggressive, require a large amount of attention, or pick their feathers. You should research the species of bird before purchasing it so that you are prepared.