

# Pet Care



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# Most Popular Dog Names

What you call your pup is an important decision. Be sure you put some creative thought into what you're bound to yell out your door every day. Naming your dog should be a fun experience that involves the whole family.

There is no real rush in naming your dog, but the sooner you can start adding his or her name to your commands, the better. You may find that you want to change your puppy's name a few days in. This is totally normal! Find a name that fits your pup's personality and breed, even if it takes you a bit of extra time. Here are some tips when settling on a name for your newest addition:

## CONSIDER THE BREED

Some names are just made for certain breeds. Calling your bulldog Bully, for example, is an easy way to go. Consider the names of any famous or TV dogs. Rin Tin Tin for a German shepherd or Lassie for a collie.

## CONSIDER DEMEANOR

Calling your new energetic puppy Slowpoke, may not be the best idea unless you're going for humor. Watch your puppy's behavior to pick up on subtle attitudes or habits. How they behave may actually make naming them much easier than you expected. This method can guide your decision-making process and help you end up with the perfect name for your

new furry friend.

## AVOID NAMES THAT SOUND LIKE COMMANDS

Puppies have much easier times of learning and assimilating to your family if his name doesn't sound like a command

that is being given. Try not to confuse your puppy with these types of names, so they will clearly understand any commands you try to give them.

## TOP NAMES

Here are some popular male

puppy names from PetMD, a pet health website.

Gus, Trapper, Finn, Cooper, Bailey, Boomer, Otto, Hawkeye, Wrigley and Ace.

Some popular names for girl pups include:

Stella, Bailey, Bella, Coco,

Sophie, Katie, Zoey, Molly, Pandora and Lexi.

If you're still hitting a wall, poke around online for various pet naming tools. You can find free platforms with large databases of names to get you started.



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# Cat Obedience Training

If you've got a stubborn cat, a local pet trainer or feline behavior expert can help. They will be able to build a custom program to help you teach your cats specific, consistent behavior. If you're more of a do-it-yourselfer, read on for tips on training your cat.

## PATIENCE IS KEY

When training your cat, remember that patience and positive reinforcement are critical to productive sessions. Punishing your cat can induce stress, leading to behavioral and health problems, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals .

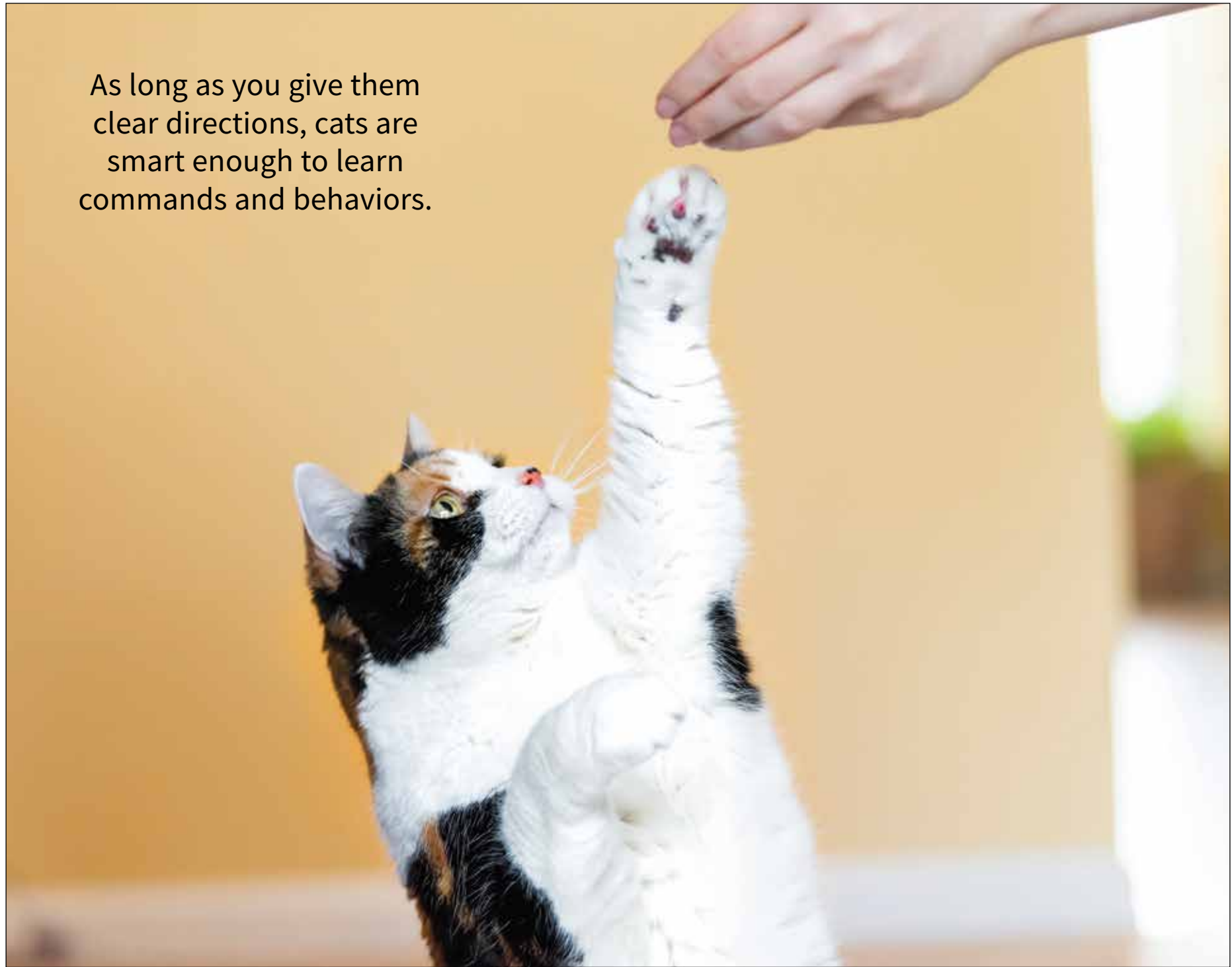
The ASPCA recommends up to two cat training sessions a day, for five minutes or less. This consistency can help turn your kitten into a well-behaved cat in no time.

## USE A CLICKER

Commonly used as training tools for a wide variety of animals, a clicker is one of the best tools you'll find for training your cat. They cost only a couple of dollars and will give you a nice return on your investment.

The noise a clicker makes can keep your cat focused on the job at hand. Remember to reinforce with snacks to help them link their behavior with rewards. If your cat obeys a command, hears the click and then gets a treat, it's more likely to repeat the behavior in the future.

As long as you give them clear directions, cats are smart enough to learn commands and behaviors.



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## LEARNING TO SHAKE

- Tap your cat's paw while saying "shake."
- Use your clicker when it moves its paw.
- Reinforce with snack or positive feedback.
- Repeat training until your

cat offers its paw without prompting from the clicker.

## LEARNING TO BEG

- Hold a treat just above your cat's head and give a "beg" command.
- When your pet stands on

its hind legs and reaches up for the snack, click to mark the behavior.

- Give your cat its treat.
- Practice until your cat begs on command without needing the treat as an incentive.

## WHEN TO SEE A VET

Some behaviors aren't normal for a cat. If your kitty has regularly been using its box but suddenly has accidents, something could be wrong. Before starting training, have your pet's health checked.

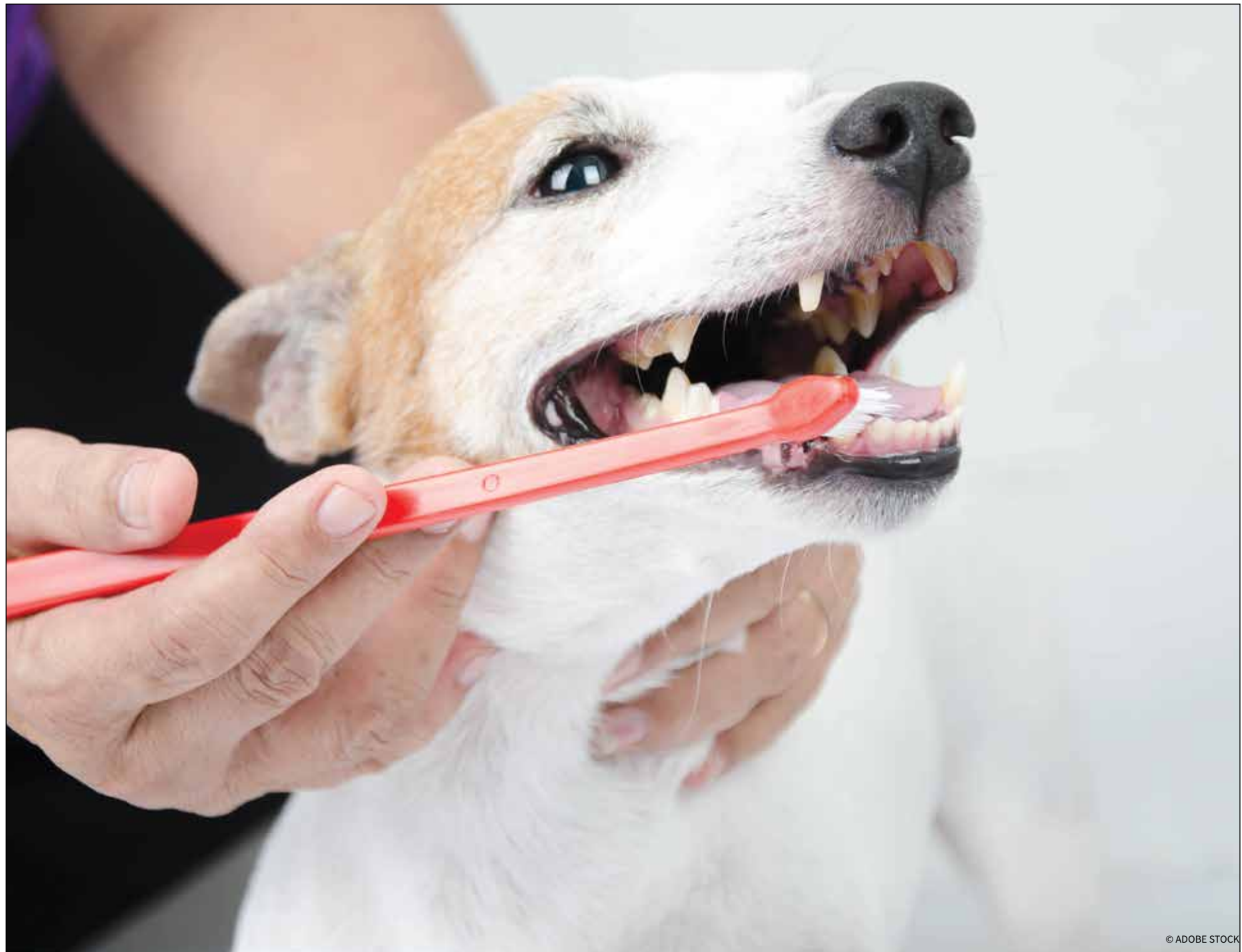


# Keep your Dog's Teeth Clean

When it comes to caring for your pet, you may be able to quickly spot something amiss with their walk, with their fur or in their eyes or ears. One area you may not consistently check is their mouth.

Most dog owners never take a good look at their dog's teeth. This is ultimately harmful to your pet, because according to the American Veterinary Dental College, it's estimated that the majority of dogs show signs of periodontal disease by just three years old.

The best way to ensure your dog's oral health can include ordering a professional cleaning service by a veterinarian. Your vet knows what's best for your dog's teeth and will be able to address any issues she finds, including potentially harmful conditions not easily recognizable by pet owners.



## MUST-KNOW DEFINITIONS

To help understand the topic of oral hygiene, let's take a look at a few basic definitions below, provided by the American Veterinary Dental College.

**Gingivitis:** Inflammation of the gums.

**Periodontitis:** A general

term for a disease of the oral cavity that attacks the gum and bone and delicate tissues around the teeth.

**Pyorrhea:** Inflammation of the gums and tooth sockets, often leading to loosening of the teeth and accompanied by pus.

**Caries:** An area of decalcifi-

cation of the tooth enamel leading to cavities in the tooth. Caries are very rare in dogs.

**Plaque:** The first buildup of material adhering to tooth enamel. Composed of a mix of intercellular matrix of bacteria, salivary polymers, remnants of epithelial cells and white

blood cells.

**Calculus (tartar):** Calcium carbonate and calcium phosphate combined with organic material, deposited on the surface of the tooth.

## PREVENTION

One of the best ways to insure optimum oral health is

to provide the dog with a well-balanced, meat-based dog food. Meat assists in keeping the mouth environment healthy. If you can, brush your pup's teeth with a brush and paste meant for use in canines. You can even find a flavor he likes to make the experience more pleasant.



# Top Safety Tips

Your pets deserve your attention and protection, especially during times of stress. Pets can be exposed to many of the same safety concerns as you, so taking care of them should come as second nature to us.

One of the most important ways you can keep your pet safe is through proper hydration. Make sure your pet always has access to plenty of fresh, cool water. You may be extra vigilant during the summer months, but staying hydrated is of the utmost importance on a daily basis for your pets.

## HOLIDAY HAZARDS

One of the most hazardous seasons of the year actually comes around the holidays. From potentially choking on plastic eggs during Easter to ingesting toxins from Thanksgiving table scraps, pet owners should be on high alert during holiday seasons.

When it comes to decorating your Christmas tree, be mindful of strings of lights by tucking cords out of reach and using outlet surge protectors. Make sure your tree is secured so prevent from toppling over onto your pets.

Pets can also feel overwhelmed with new company



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during the holidays, especially rambunctious children. Be sure your pet has a nice, quiet area he or she can relax while your house is full of people.

## PET FIRST-AID KIT

A first-aid kit is important during natural disasters and vacations away from home, as well as in your home for day-to-day purposes.

Here are some of the best items to keep in your pet first-aid kit, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

- Absorbent gauze pads.
- Adhesive tape.
- Cotton balls or swabs.
- Fresh 3% hydrogen peroxide to induce vomiting.
- Disposable gloves.
- Scissors with a blunt end.
- Tweezers.
- OTC antibiotic ointment.
- Oral syringe or turkey baster.
- Liquid dishwashing detergent.
- Towels.
- Small flashlight.
- Alcohol wipes.
- Styptic powder.
- Saline eye solution.
- Artificial tear gel.
- Phone number, clinic name, address of your veterinarian as well as local veterinary emergency clinics.

The ASPCA recommends checking your pack every few months to make sure nothing has expired or needs to be replaced. Always remember to keep your kit out of the reach of children.



# How to Care for an Older Pet

It seems like just yesterday when you brought your puppy or kitten home for the first time. But just like us humans, our pets age in what seems like a snap of the finger. Where did the time go?

If you're caring for an aging pet, you may find yourself stressed or worried for their health. Remember that pets can pick up on your mood, so it's important to keep a positive, loving attitude when it comes to taking care of your aging dog, cat or other pet.

Read on for multiple issues and trends to keep in mind when it comes to being the best pet owner possible for your favorite furry friend.

## AGING ISSUES

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, the oldest recorded age of a cat is 34 years, while the oldest recorded age of a dog is 29. It varies, but cats and small dogs are generally considered geriatric at the age of seven. Larger breed dogs tend to have shorter life spans and are considered geriatric when they are around six years of age, according to the AVMA.

As they age, geriatric pets can develop many of the same problems seen in older peo-



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ple, including cancer, heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease, diabetes, joint or bone disease, senility and weakness.

## AGING TRENDS

Due to improved veterinary care, dietary habits and over-

all pet health awareness, pets are living longer now than they ever have before. It's your job as a pet owner to recognize signs of aging so you can alert your veterinarian to your concerns. Work with your local vet to establish a plan for helping your pet age graceful-

ly. This can include changes to diet or activity level.

Here are the top 10 tips from ElderlyPet.org on how to best care for your aging pet:

- Watch for changes in behavior.
- Schedule regular vet visits.
- Change your pet's diet.

- Keep your pet moving and active.

- Look for signs of arthritis.
- Be patient.
- Help your pet stay clean.
- Be aware of the signs of cognitive dysfunction.
- Stay focused on your pet's quality of life.





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# Caring for Pets in Hot Weather

Warm weather can be one of the most dangerous times for your pets, especially if you don't keep track of their overall comfort and hydration.

If you keep your pets outside, it is imperative that you make sure they have plenty of shade and fresh water during warmer days.

Your inside pets are also at risk during walks around the neighborhood. Knowing the risks and being prepared

can help keep your pet safe in potentially dangerous weather situations.

## STAY HEALTHY IN THE HEAT

Talk to your veterinarian about warm-weather risks for pets. They will have great advice on caring for your pets in the heat and for taking the proper precautions to protect their overall health. There are certain parasites to keep your pet clear from during the hot summer months, including ticks, heartworm and fleas. Your vet can prescribe tick, heartworm and flea medicine that keeps your pet in the clear for months at a time.

## HEAT ILLNESSES

Ask your veterinarian how to recognize signs of heat stress, which can include any of the following signals:

- Excessive panting or drooling
- Restlessness
- Abnormal gum and tongue color
- Collapse

Call your vet's emergency number if you notice any of these signs in your pet. Acting quickly can make the difference between life and death for your pet.

## KEEP THEM COMFORTABLE

Remember the following rules of thumb when deciding if the heat is

likely to impact your pets.

- If it feels warm outside to you, it's even hotter for your pet.
- Plan to take your walks or do your pet exercises during the cooler parts of the day, like the morning or evening hours.
- Try to avoid making your pet walk on hot surfaces like asphalt that can hurt or damage your pet's paws.

Always consult with your vet if you have any questions about keeping your pet safe during the warm summer months. With a little prevention and planning, you can ensure a healthy, happy summer season for your furry friends.





# Pet Ownership by the Numbers

If you don't own a pet in the United States, you are in the minority.

Nearly 57% of all U.S. households owned a pet the end of 2016, according to data from the American Veterinary Medical Association. The study data also found that about 38% of households owned one or more dogs, the highest estimated rate of dog ownership since the AVMA

began measuring it in 1982. Cats were the next most popular pet, found in 25% of U.S. households.

## EXOTIC PETS

What may surprise you is the increase in pet ownership for less traditional pets like poultry and lizards, which have risen dramatically over the past few years, says the AVMA. The survey uncovered more people than ever owning specialty or exotic pets, such as fish, ferrets, rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils,

turtles, snakes, lizards, poultry, livestock and amphibians. More than 13% of U.S. households owned a specialty or exotic pet in 2016. This represented a 25% increase from 2011.

## SURVEY STATISTICS

According to the AVMA survey, pet ownership is highest in rural states. The 10 states that had the highest percentage of pet-owning households in 2016 were Wyoming (72%); West Virginia (71%); Nebraska (70%); Vermont (70%); Idaho

(70%); Indiana (69%); Arkansas (69%); Mississippi (65%); Oklahoma (65%); and Colorado (65%).

Conversely, pet ownership is generally lower in urban states. The 10 states with the lowest percentage of pet-owning households were Rhode Island (45%); South Dakota (46%); New York (50%); New Jersey (47%); Maryland (49%); Illinois (49%); Massachusetts (49%); Connecticut (50%); Georgia (51%); and New Hampshire (52%).

## FREQUENCY OF VET VISITS

The 2017-2018 Pet Ownership and Demographics Sourcebook also uncovered who visits a veterinarian, how frequently and under what circumstances. Surveys showed that dog owners have a higher propensity to obtain veterinary care than do owners of other types of pets. Specifically, in 2016, dog-owning veterinary clients made three visits to the veterinarian. Cat-owning veterinary clients made just a bit more than 2 visits.