



INCREDIBLE IN EVERY DETAIL

Responsible Pet Ownership

GUIDE



**This guide has been written solely for general information purposes only
and it is not intended for use as a veterinary medical manual in place
of veterinary consultations and treatments.**

**It is recommended that dogs and cats receive regular veterinary health checks.
If you have any questions or need additional information
you should consult a veterinarian directly.**



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Our Collective Responsibility

TO ANIMALS

Cats and dogs have lived as domesticated animals for many thousands of years. Their place in society has greatly evolved and is now well-established, with recent surveys showing that the majority of households worldwide now own a pet. In certain countries, pet ownership is as high as 80%.

While pets were previously primarily owned for the task they performed (like hunting mice for cats or protecting houses for dogs, for example), they are now mainly valued for their companionship. The benefits they bring to society are more widely acknowledged now, and we regularly see examples of their positive impact.

Being a pet owner can be an **extremely rewarding and enriching experience**, but it also comes with **significant responsibilities**.

In fact, owning a pet implies a number of inherent duties and moral obligations in order to care for them properly and **safeguard their health and welfare**.

These are critical if we don't want pets to be perceived as a nuisance to society (noise, faeces in the street, odour, wandering animals and aggressive behaviour) or even worse, if we don't want their welfare to be at risk.

Our mission at **Royal Canin** is to create healthy, safe and nutritious diets that are adapted to the needs of every dog and cat. We believe that **pets make our lives better** and that our responsibility extends far beyond the quality of our products and services, to promoting the overall **health and wellbeing of pets through responsible pet ownership** as well as promoting the positive experience of having a pet. We believe that **the health and well-being of animals is the responsibility of every person who comes in contact with them**.

This is why we aim to continuously share our knowledge of dogs and cats globally, in order for us all **to better understand and care for them**. As such, we have developed this guide that will help pet owners like you **forge a relationship with your cat or dog** that benefits both you and your pet. In this guide, you will find **practical information and advice** to help you enrich your pet's life, while also enriching your experience as a pet owner.





Animal welfare has been defined by the OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) **as respect of the following five freedoms of animals:**

5

FREEDOMS *for* **Animals**



FREEDOM FROM HUNGER AND THIRST



by ready access to fresh water and diet to maintain health and vigour.



FREEDOM FROM DISCOMFORT



by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.



FREEDOM FROM PAIN INJURY OR DISEASE



by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.



FREEDOM TO EXPRESS NORMAL BEHAVIOUR



by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.



FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND DISTRESS



by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP?

At Royal Canin, responsible pet ownership is defined as **'The responsibility of an owner to take good care of the needs of their cat/dog throughout their life'**.

This includes creating the right conditions for a happy, healthy, well socialised and well-behaved cat/dog that enriches their family's lives and society as a whole, while minimising any potential risks they may pose to the public, other animals or the environment. **Responsible pet ownership should be shared by all pet owners.** Shortcomings in cat and dog care can have a negative impact on the welfare of these animals, and, in serious cases, may lead to suffering.

Beyond the implications for individual pets, irresponsible ownership can have negative societal consequences.

Pet ownership is a big commitment that should be taken seriously. With the right knowledge and level of dedication, an owner will gain a happy, healthy, well behaved and loving family member who will be a pleasure to spend time with.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS ABOUT PET OWNERSHIP

Responsible pet ownership is about respect, common sense and accounting for your animal's full range of needs. But, if an owner behaves irresponsibly towards his pet, it can become a legal issue.

Each country has its own rules about animal welfare, but some of the common issues covered by the law include mistreatment and abandonment of the animal, or if the animal attacks other people or pets. Please make sure you are aware of **the specific laws, rules and regulations** that govern animal welfare and responsible pet ownership where you live or may travel.

It is also worth noting that all European Union Member Countries and many other countries of the world require that **a pet microchip** must be implanted in cats and dogs for identification.





Acquiring a Pet

A DELIBERATE ACT

Welcoming a new cat or dog to your home is **an exciting moment in any household**. It's a moment of change that can considerably impact the lives of each member of your family.

It is also **a long-term commitment** that entails a number of responsibilities. Therefore, the decision to acquire a pet should not be taken lightly, but should rather be thought of carefully via discussions with all family members.

Too often we see abandoned pets in shelters because their owners were not ready to take on this responsibility. So, **before you make your decision, it's important to ask yourself some fundamental questions.**

TIME

Do you have enough time?

Dogs, in particular, need your time. A dog should be walked every day, and generally needs a significant amount of attention.

While cats are usually more independent, they still demand daily feeding, regular grooming, visits to veterinarians as well as some affection and stimulation.

COMMITMENT

Are you ready to commit for the long term?

The average life expectancy of dogs is 8 to 14 years, depending on the breed and size.

Cats kept indoors can live 20 years or more. So, you need to be prepared for a long-term commitment.

If you move to a new house or your situation changes in any way, you'll need to account for your animal's needs.

BUDGET

Can you provide financially?

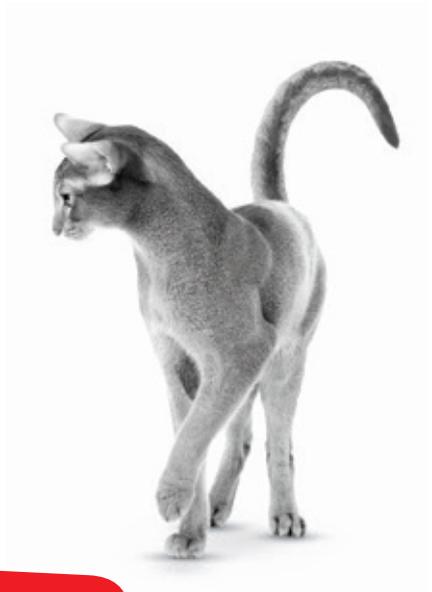
Owning a dog or a cat involves some regular spending. You'll need to budget for feeding your animal, training, visits to the vet, vaccinations, worming and flea treatments for example.



CHOOSING YOUR PET

You may already have a good idea of which animal or breed of animal you'd like to welcome to your home. But are you sure it's the best suited to your environment and lifestyle?

Each animal and each individual breed has very different characteristics. If those characteristics are a good fit with you and your family, you'll have a good chance of enjoying a happy and healthy relationship with your pet.



QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOURSELF BEFORE WELCOMING A PET INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

- How much time do you have for training, walking, playing or grooming?
- Who will be the official owner?
- Will you need to leave your animal at home alone for significant periods of time?
- What size of pet is best for your home?
- Which animal would be the best fit with your family, housemates or other pets?
- What are the main reasons you want a pet (guard dog, exercise, company)?
- If you already have a pet, will they get along?
- Which animal and breed would be best suited to the space you have (flat, house, garden)?
- Are there any type of behaviour not suitable with your expectations (hyperactive, talkative, exclusive pets for example)?

MALE OR FEMALE?

The **biological and physical differences** in males and females have an impact on their behaviour.

Female dogs are in season at least **twice per year**. Female cats have a reproductive season during which they are basically in **heat every 3-4 weeks**. During this time, you'll need to keep your female away from intact males to ensure she doesn't fall pregnant.

Intact males, meanwhile may try to leave the house in search of a female. Non-neutered male cats tend to **spray urine** to mark their territory, producing undesirable stains and odours in your home.

WHICH BREED?

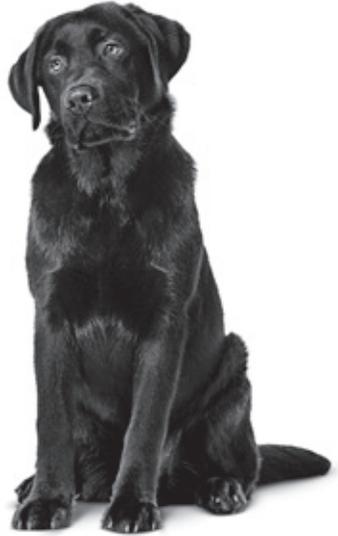
The breed of an animal contributes significantly to their personality. Some breeds are more active or more independent, while others require more attention. If the breed isn't suited to your lifestyle or environment, the animal may suffer from this and potentially develop behavioural issues. You should discuss this with your veterinarian, breeder, your friends and your family.

Certain **dog breeds**, such as Golden Retrievers or Border Collies, need a great deal of exercise. While other breeds, such as Yorkshire Terriers, require a great deal of grooming.

Similarly, **cats** differ greatly by breed. Bengals, for example, are energetic and always on the go, while Ragdolls tend to be more relaxed and easy-going. It's worth noting that some **breeds** may have genetic defects and hereditary diseases. You can ask your veterinarian for more information on this matter. You can also choose to acquire a non pure bred

dog or cat from a shelter or a neighbour/friend/veterinary adoption clinic, etc.

Don't forget that **every animal has their own personality**. While the breed may impact that personality, it's not the only influence on your pet's behaviour. Try to find out about the animal's character and history when making your decision.



YOUNG OR MATURE?

Many people like the idea of seeing their pet grow up from baby to adult. While kittens and puppies may be cute, you should ask yourself if this is the best choice for your situation and family. **Young animals are more demanding**, requiring more time and energy to train.

If you do choose a kitten or puppy, make sure they are **weaned** and that weaning wasn't forced at too young an age, as this can lead to behavioural and growth problems.

Adult dogs and cats are already toilet trained and need less attention. However, they may already have habits or behavioural issues which may be difficult to change. It's also worth finding out about the past of the animal to make sure you are able to manage any potential behavioural problems they may have.



WHERE TO GET YOUR PET ?

Responsible pet ownership begins with responsible acquisition. Make sure you know **where the animal has come from** and the environment, he or she has been raised in.

Newspaper/Internet ads

Reputable breeders sometimes advertise in newspapers or on the internet, but you should be cautious as these are also common outlets for illegal animal trafficking. Make sure the ad offers precise details about the breeder and the animal – and ask plenty of questions when you make contact.

Pet store

You'll benefit from professional advice in a pet store, but always find out where they source their puppies and kittens. A reputable establishment selling kittens and puppies will be able to provide full details of the conditions in which they were bred and information about their parents. They will also ensure that their employees are appropriately trained, their premises meet necessary hygiene and welfare conditions, and enable animals in their care to express natural behaviour. The pets they sell will also be under regular veterinary supervision.

Events

Trade shows, exhibitions and Pet Adoption Days are animal-focused events where it's sometimes possible to acquire a new pet. Once again, make sure you ask questions and only buy from a reputable breeder.

Breeders

Responsible breeders care for the well-being of kittens and puppies – and that of their parents. They are particularly attentive to disease prevention, genetic testing and socialisation, ensuring your pet is well-balanced and healthy.



MAKE SURE THE BREEDER IS A RESPONSIBLE BREEDER

If you decide to get your pet **from a breeder**, make sure you **ask the right questions**.

The breeder should be happy to show you the mother and the premises, so you can check the environment your future pet was raised in. Ask if the animal has had a health check **carried out by a veterinarian** and specifically which **vaccinations** the kitten/puppy has received. You can also enquire as to whether the puppy or kitten has had appropriate deworming treatment. A responsible breeder will **ask you some questions** to ensure their pets are only going home with responsible owners with a well-suited lifestyle for each individual puppy or kitten.

Animal shelter

Adopting a cat or dog from a shelter means **offering an abandoned animal a second chance**. Most animals in shelters will already be vaccinated, house-trained, de-wormed and neutered. A good shelter will always try and **find the animal that will suit your situation best** and will ask you questions about your needs and lifestyle.

Friends/neighbours

Taking a puppy or kitten off a neighbour or friend whose pet has had a litter is an **easy way to acquire a new pet**. Before taking them home, ensure that the mother is in good health, that weaning is completed and that they receive a full examination by a local veterinarian as soon as possible.

Stray cats/dogs

Sometimes you can also **rescue an animal** that is abandoned on the street. If you do so, the first thing to do is to go to a veterinarian to **check if the pet is lost** rather than abandoned. The vet will scan for an **identification microchip** and if the owners' details are found they will try to return the pet to the owner. Your veterinarian will also be able to evaluate the age of the animal and do a health check.

If you decide to adopt this pet, the socialisation maybe a little more challenging, but you are certainly doing a great deed to give this stray pet a home.

*Find out more information on how to welcome your new puppy/kitten in your home in the **Royal Canin Puppy Guide** and the **Royal Canin Kitten Guide**.*





HOME ENVIRONMENT

Meeting the environmental needs of cats and dogs helps to ensure their optimal **well-being and behaviour**, good health and overall quality of life. These needs encompass not only their physical surroundings, but also their social interactions with people and other animals in the home. A familiar and predictable home in which the pet can exercise some control over their physical environment and social interactions, helps to **reduce their stress levels** and enables them to cope with any challenges.

For both cats and dogs, choose **a sleeping area** that is warm, calm and free of draughts.

Cats will prefer to sleep next to a source of heat (radiators, or in sunlight for example) while some dogs can be accustomed to sleep in a kennel or a crate. The sleeping area will have to be away from other resources such as food bowls, water bowls and toileting areas, and ideally shouldn't be located in the bedroom.

Cats need a **3 dimensional environment**, meaning that they will need **places to rest and play** at ground level, but also high-up. As they tend to react to stress by finding a hiding place, you should provide locations where they will be able to retreat, offering concealment and seclusion, while still allowing them to survey the external environment. As cats love to scratch, it's a good idea to give your kitten a purpose-built scratching post, an indoor cat tree or a scratching mat if you want to **keep your curtains and furniture safe**. You can encourage them to use the scratching post by spraying it with Catnip.

When they discover a new environment, cats will need to be **introduced gradually to their new surroundings**.

As cats and dogs use their sense of smell to get used to new surroundings, you may want to consider **eliminating cleaning products** with a **strong smell** from your home. These can interfere with your pet's sense of smell and may therefore **be a source of stress**.



SOCIALISATION

Strengthening the bond between you and your new pet can be extremely rewarding, but it's important to take it step by step. Ideally, the **socialization process** should begin early in your pet's life: before 2 months of age for a kitten and before 3 months of age for a puppy.

Try to expose your pet to as many different sights, sounds, experiences and people as possible, getting them used to the world around them. This will help them to be less fearful as they grow up. Start slowly, **interacting with your new pet** regularly but for short periods. Look out for signs that your pet is ready to interact. In dogs, the tail and body will be relaxed, while their mouth may be partly open. Cats tend to purr and blink slowly and may approach you or roll on their side near to you. To **gain your pet's trust**, you can initially use treats such as kibbles. This may help to **overcome their anxiety** in the early stages. Make sure treats become less regular over time as they can contribute to obesity. If you have children, watch them closely and help them to understand that

your new pet is not a toy; it's a living thing that should never be approached from behind and should only be cuddled under your supervision. Once your pet is more confident, let new people stroke and cuddle them under your supervision. Aim to expose your animal to people of all ages, a wide range of sounds (telephones, TVs, cars, etc.) and different places. It's also a good idea to introduce your pet to other cats and dogs while they are still young, once their initial vaccination course has been completed.



SAFETY FIRST: ELIMINATING DANGER

Cats and dogs are inquisitive by nature and will want to explore all aspects of their new surroundings – with potentially dangerous consequences. Make sure you've prepared your home so that your pet can poke around without harming themselves or others. This means **hiding away** any **potentially toxic substances**, medication, vitamins, poisonous plants, electric wires and certain foods like chocolate, which can make animals ill. You should also cover sockets and bins that are in their direct environment.

In the first few days, keep **windows fastened**, doors shut and balconies inaccessible. If you have a **garden**, check fences and gates to ensure they are sturdy and high enough to stop a young animal from escaping.

MULTI-PET HOUSEHOLDS

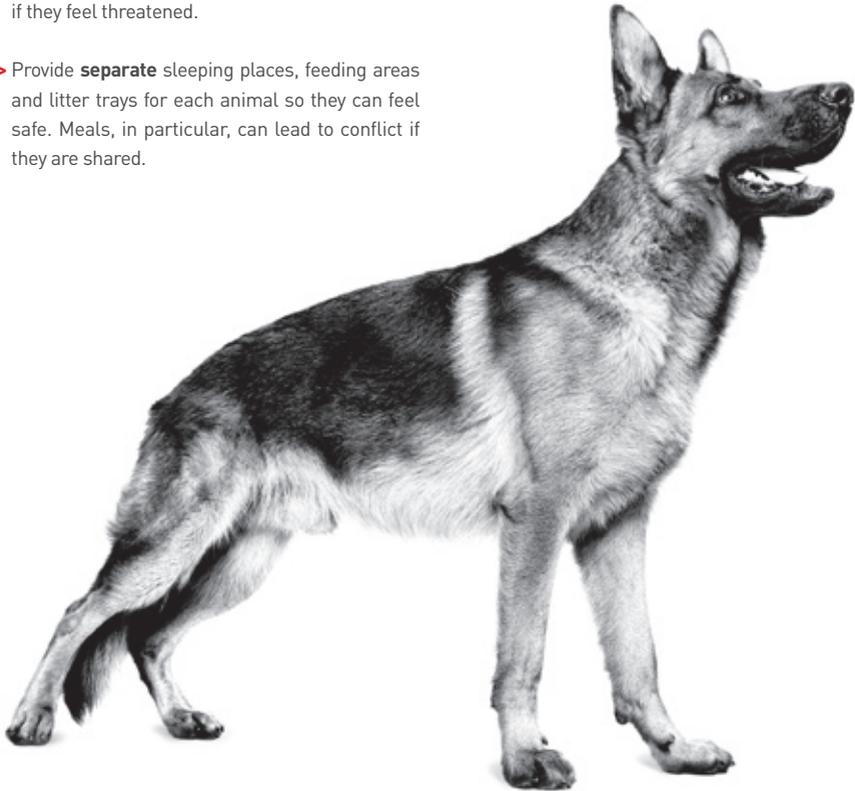
So long as their environmental needs are met, most cats and dogs can **live happily together** in the same household. Harmonious coexistence among cats is best achieved by adopting closely-related and/or socially bonded pairs. When **introducing a new pet** into the home of an existing one, it is often easier for an adult animal to accept a kitten or puppy, than it is for them to accept another unrelated adult.

To help smooth these introductions, try the following steps:

Introduce the animals in a **neutral setting**, such as an outdoor space neither pet knows or a room in your house that the resident pet rarely uses.

- > Make sure cats have access to a **safe hiding place** if they feel threatened.
- > Provide **separate** sleeping places, feeding areas and litter trays for each animal so they can feel safe. Meals, in particular, can lead to conflict if they are shared.

- > Take a toy or blanket used by your new pet and wipe it across the bottom of the walls in your home so your resident pet can get used to the **new scent**.
- > Use **stair gates** to allow two dogs or a dog and a cat to have separate areas.
- > Carry out introductions gradually to allow familiarity to develop slowly and under supervision the first few times.



HEALTH AND CARE

Preventive healthcare for pets is an essential part of pet health and can help to **reduce a pet's risk of developing a wide range of problems**. A comprehensive approach focusing on nutrition counselling, vaccinations, parasite control, dental care and behaviour counselling can help to mitigate issues such as periodontal disease, fleas and ticks, heartworm disease, obesity or diabetes mellitus.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations are the best way to **protect your pet and your family against illness and disease**.

Some vaccines are compulsory, others are recommended, and this also varies depending on where you live and the extent to which your pet is exposed to the risk of disease. Generally, the first vaccines are given from the **age of 6-8 weeks**, when a puppy or kitten is no longer **protected by maternal antibodies** and is particularly vulnerable to disease. The first vaccinations are then followed by regular boosters, some of which are yearly.

Talk to your veterinarian to find out which vaccinations you should consider for your pet and the appropriate timing for the vaccinations.

Worming and parasites

It is recommended to regularly deworm your pet. Puppies and kittens are particularly sensitive to **internal parasites** and require a number of deworming treatments. Worms can represent a risk to humans, and particularly to children as they can get them from direct contact with their pets and their faeces.

So it is imperative to talk to your veterinarian who will be able to recommend a regular deworming programme, adapted to your pet's lifestyle and location.

External parasites can also be harmful to your pet. **Fleas** in particular, cause irritation and skin problems. The best approach is regular preventative flea control through oral or spot-on products. Flea collars are also an option for dogs. If you live in an area with ticks, consider using an acaricide to protect your pet. Other common parasites include ear mites, demodex mites and ringworm. Your veterinarian will be able to provide you the best advice regarding prevention of external parasites for your pet.

PET INSURANCE

Medical care for your pet can be costly. From the beginning, you'll need to budget for routine visits to the vet, but if your cat or dog has a **serious illness** or **breaks a leg**, the cost can get extremely expensive. Contracting a pet insurance is a way to help cover these expenses. Pet insurance is either for the **lifetime** of your animal or for a **specified period**. Some policies cover pre-existing conditions and vaccinations, while others are for emergency care only. Third-party liability may also be included, covering expenses if your animal causes an accident by running out into the road, for example.

In Sweden and the UK, pet insurance is relatively common.

Neutering

An awareness of the reproductive potential of cats and dogs can help ensure that they do not reproduce freely. The large majority of cat litters are unplanned. A female cat can have up to three litters a year (5–6 kittens per litter – potentially up to 18 kittens per year), and a female dog is able to have two litters a year (up to 10 puppies per litter – potentially up to 20 puppies per year). Given the potential for such huge numbers of unplanned pets, many of which might be relinquished to animal charities and shelters, **population control measures are important.**

Neutering consists of castrating male animals (removing their testes) and spaying females (removing their ovaries). As well as protecting against unwanted pregnancies and abandoned animals, neutering can also offer a **number of behavioural benefits.**

While intact females tend to get agitated when in heat, spayed animals will no longer go into heat. Neutered females are also less at risk of **mammary, uterine and ovarian cancer** as well as pyometra, a serious infection of the uterus. In males, castration reduces the probability of **testicular and prostatic disorders in dogs.** Castrated males are also less aggressive, less dominant and less likely to spray urine, hump objects or escape from home in search of a mate.

It is important to know that neutering results in increased appetite and a reduction in daily energy requirements in both cats and dogs. To limit the risks of obesity, neutered cats and dogs must be given a lower calorie food. There are specific diets available for neutered dogs and cats and exercise is important. Your veterinarian will be able to advise you regarding the best age for your pet to be neutered and can help you with the best diets for your pet once it is neutered.

TAKE YOUR PET TO THE VET!

When you first get your new pet, it's recommended to organise a **visit within 48 hours.** The veterinarian will thoroughly examine your cat or dog to make sure they are healthy and have no underlying conditions. This is also an opportunity for you to ask questions and find out about vaccinations and other **preventative care.** For **kittens and puppies,** it's recommended to get a **check-up every six months.** You can schedule these appointments to coincide with booster vaccinations.

For adult cats and dogs, a **yearly visit** is important for a health check and this can also aid the early detection of diseases and other health problems, helping to reduce complications and suffering.

Dental care

Dental problems are extremely common among cats and dogs. **Periodontal disease** attacks the gums, loosens the ligaments attaching the teeth to the jaw bone and eventually causes teeth to fall out. Furthermore, bacteria in the mouth can trigger other infections in other parts of the body.

Your veterinarian will usually be able to help with emergencies, but **the prevention of dental disease is essential**, especially as your pet will often show few symptoms of oral discomfort.

The best preventative care is to **brush your pet's teeth daily** with a special canine or feline brush and special pet toothpaste. Offering dogs a chewing bar can help them apply friction to their teeth and thereby eliminate some of the bacteria that cause plaque. Kibbles also help slow down the development of tartar.

Grooming

Regular bathing and grooming are essential for **maintaining good skin and coat health** and condition as well as cleanliness, although different breeds or types of dogs and cats vary in the levels of care they need.

In long-haired cats and dogs the coat can become matted over a relatively short period of time, which can result in tightening of the skin, discomfort and pain. Short-haired dogs require grooming about once a week and bathing about every six weeks, while short-haired cats require only occasional grooming and some may never need bathing. Other dogs can be groomed as required, with some long/curly-haired breeds requiring daily grooming. Dogs with long hair may need to be trimmed or clipped and bathed every four to six weeks. Pet care specialists and veterinarians can offer advice about **how to carry out bathing and grooming** and can supply the details of a reputable grooming service.



Toileting

An **appropriate toileting routine** is key to avoid hygiene issues as well as tension between owner and pet.

Cats are house trained from an early age. However, to encourage appropriate toileting behaviour, you'll need to provide a **litter tray** in an easily accessible spot in a quiet area and to make sure to **clean it regularly** (if you have one cat, it is recommended to **clean the litter once a day** for waste disposal, and once a week for washing the tray and replacing the litter). Cats may exhibit a preference for a particular type of litter and litter tray: open or closed tray, aromatic, with clay, corn or silica gel crystals for example. A relaxed body language during toileting, like tail held loosely, ears forward and slightly to the side, is a good indicator of the preference.

Litter trays should be kept where **dogs or little children cannot access them**. In general, it is recommended to have **one litter tray per cat** in the household, plus one spare, all of which in different, quiet areas of the house.

Dogs need to be **taken out several times per day** to relieve themselves. However, going out shouldn't be exclusively dedicated to getting your dog to toilet, but should **include a short walk** as this is important for their **well-being** and enable them to exercise.

If you have just acquired a new puppy, toilet training is a more involved and lengthy process. Puppies have weak bladder control and need to urinate often (every 1-2 hours), and may spontaneously urinate if they are playing or become excited. Their digestive tract is also stimulated by eating, and they will usually need to urinate and defecate shortly after a meal (within 15-30 mins) and just after waking from a nap. **Establishing a routine** is essential. Take your puppy outside often, praise him with the same words whenever he urinates in the right place and offer a reward in the early stages of training.

Don't forget to clean up after your dog! As you are training your dog to new habits, get also into the routine of taking bags or a poop-scoop with you when you step outside your door, so that you can legally dispose of your dog's mess.





Unnecessary and controversial procedures

Unnecessary and controversial procedures are procedures which are not considered essential for medical reasons and are conducted in order to alter appearance or modify behaviour. Tail docking and ear cropping procedures in dogs involve surgical removal of part or all of the tail or ear respectively and are usually conducted for aesthetic reasons. Procedures like these, unless medically indicated, are unnecessary and should be avoided as they offer no benefit to the pet. **In many countries these procedures are illegal.**

Other procedures in this category include declawing of cats and removal of vocal cords in dogs that bark excessively.

These interventions should never be necessary if the animal has been properly trained and socialised or provided with outlets for instinctive behaviour. Education of pet owners about appropriate behavioural and environmental modifications can provide more humane solutions to these problems. For instance, scratching behaviour can be directed to cardboard scratchers or scratching posts. Equally, behavioural modification and positive training can help tackle excessive barking.

Older cats and dogs

Continuous improvements in **veterinary healthcare and nutrition** have helped **cats and dogs to live longer** and has increased the size of the senior pet population. Older cats and dogs make **wonderful companions** as they are often content to spend more time around the home and tend to be more laid back and calmer than younger animals. There are a number of health, behavioural and social changes that occur with aging that may require some adaptation in the pet's environment, diet or routine. Owners, in partnership with their veterinarian, have an important role to play in supporting quality of life in older pets.

As they get older, animals tend to be less active and sleep longer. Their **vision, smell and hearing** usually worsens, and they may develop cataracts, dental disease and, especially in dogs, osteoarthritis (joint disease). Many of these conditions can be relieved, which is why it's essential to have senior cats and dogs checked by your **veterinarian more often.**

If well cared for, many cats and dogs can live into their mid-teens and some cats may even live into their twenties. Cats and dogs are considered to be in their senior years when they reach the last third of their life span.

Behavioural changes such as vocalisation, change in appetite or water intake, house soiling, or for cats, changes in the use of the litter tray, may reflect an underlying medical problem that should be investigated by a veterinarian.

NUTRITION

Every animal has **unique nutritional requirements** depending on a range of factors, including their breed, size, age, lifestyle, activity and environment. A good diet that meets those needs, will help enhance your pet's health and wellness through every stage of life.

It's important to offer your pet a balanced diet, with all the essential nutrients they need and the right amount of calories. This can help to prevent health issues arising and, if they do, catch them early thereby increasing the chances of a good outcome. Don't forget to give your pet constant **access to water**. Continuous access to water is vital even if you are feeding your pet with wet food. Water should be fresh, not too cold (not less than 10°C) and the bowl should always be clean. Do not give milk to your pet as they don't digest it.

Respecting your pet's feeding behaviour

Animals have **natural feeding patterns** and **rhythms** that should be respected.

Cats have an innate instinct to spread food consumption over **10 to 20 meals a day**. This behaviour is a throwback to when they were solitary hunters. As cats may now be more sedentary you can minimise the risk of them putting on weight by **respecting their daily ration** and **making them exercise** for their food with the use of food puzzles for example.

Cats like to have their feeding station in a calm place that has an escape route, another remnant of their past when they had to be vigilant of predators.

Food toys are great for some dogs and foraging for food is a **great enrichment activity** in some cases. Sudden changes in diet force the digestive system to adapt and may cause diarrhoea or loose stools. For puppies under 6 months, 3 meals a day are recommended, while adult dogs can have only one or two meals a day (two are recommended for large breeds). Puppies under 6 months need training – you can use the kibbles as treats. And the extra part of the daily ration can then be given as a meal. Food must not be freely available: in order to prevent excessive weight gain, you should respect the daily ration. If possible, avoid any type of exercise just after mealtimes, especially with large breed puppies, in order to prevent risk of stomach bloating/torsion, which they can be prone to.

Leave your dog alone with his food bowl for 10 minutes without any disturbance. If he hasn't finished eating after this time, then take the bowl away and wait until the next mealtime.

For both cats and dogs, **make sure you provide two dishes**, one for **food** and one for **water** and they should be quite separate from each other. For cats, both the food and water bowls should be a certain distance from the litter tray to encourage good hygiene.



Treats and training

A reward is anything that your pet enjoys (e.g. dry food, treats, attention/petting, a fun toy, a play session). The key is to find the reward that truly motivates your pet. Reward based training or positive reinforcement based training is one of the most effective training methods and contributes to a better relationship between owners and their pets.

Don't forget that a fun game with you, or attention in the form of a positive tone of voice or petting can be a better reward than food or treats in some cases and helps to keep excess weight at bay.

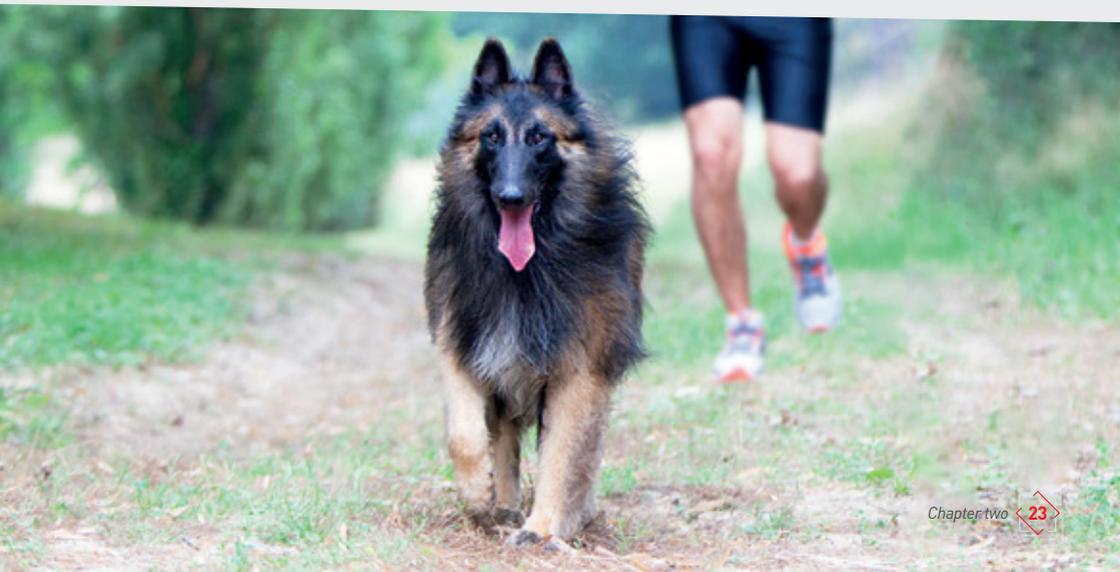
If you do use treats, be aware that some treats are designed for easy palatability and may be packed with other nutrients to offer additional health benefits such as dental care or joint support.

However, it's important to limit the use of treats as they can contribute to excessive weight gain and may imbalance your pet's diet. As such, if your pet has had treats in the day, adjust their daily food portion accordingly. If you use a lot of food rewards for training, you can also use a number of the kibbles from your pet's allocated daily amount as a treat to reward them. Table scraps or human food snacks tend to be more energy rich and lower in nutritional value than treats designed specifically for pets and should therefore be avoided.

HOW TO KEEP OBESITY AT BAY ?

Overfeeding your pet can quickly cause them to become overweight, especially if they are sedentary. Today, obesity is the most common nutritional disorder in companion animals. Indoor cats are particularly at risk. Why does this matter? Because obesity reduces your pet's life expectancy, exposing them to a greater risk of joint problems, diabetes, cancer and urinary issues.

The key to keeping obesity at bay is to measure precise daily portions, not give extra food, encourage exercise, as well as weigh the pet at least once a month and regularly monitor their body condition. The Body Condition Score Chart is a good way to assess your pet. It's based on carefully feeling your pet's body and observing them from different angles. Don't hesitate to talk your veterinarian who will be able to devise a realistic weight loss strategy if needed (and also advise on how to prevent your pet putting on weight).



YOUR PET'S WELL-BEING

We have talked about the **five freedoms of animals** at the beginning of this guide that cover their basic welfare needs: adequate food, water, ventilation and protection from injury or ill health. However, good welfare should aim to go beyond the basic requirements to include things that will enrich and improve a pet's quality of life and, in turn, enhance the overall owner-pet relationship. Enriched welfare aims to meet a pet's social and behavioural needs and strives for positive outcomes and experiences for both pet and owner. This includes providing pets with opportunities to express natural behaviour. Different ages, breeds and individual differences in behaviour may result in different welfare needs.

Strengthen your relationship with your pet

Positive human contact is usually beneficial for the welfare of dogs and cats.

To build the bond with your pet, provide **plenty of personal contact**: physical contact such as grooming and stroking is mutually beneficial and helps owners too by making them feel more relaxed. Providing affection, routine, dependability, and meeting their essential needs will also strengthen the owner-pet bond.

Relationships are built on spending time together and sharing experiences. Spending time having fun, either during exercise and/or play are ways to have fun whilst building the bond.

Keeping your pet stimulated

It's important to keep your pet physically and mentally stimulated. For dogs, this means **outdoor games and exercise** (see below : Physical activity). Make sure you regularly alternate exercises to keep training fun.

For cats, you will need to organise their environment to entice them to move around and play.

The objective is to **encourage them to express their natural behaviour**. It is not only about giving them some toys to play with, but also about adapting the environment to their natural needs. This is particularly important for indoor cats, who need mental stimulation and encouragement to expend energy. If they cannot play or have no social interaction they will seek to alleviate their boredom by spending more time grooming, feeding and sleeping.





Outdoor cats will find stimulation when they wander outside your home. By installing a cat flap, you'll give your cat the freedom to explore when they want. Some cat flaps have detection systems that use microchip identification or special collars to only let your cat through. We also encourage the use of outdoor cat enclosures which can help keep your cat safe whilst still allowing them to be outside. Outdoor enclosures also helps prevent wildlife being hurt by your cat. Bells on a collar can also help this as well.

STIMULATING YOUR INDOOR CAT

Cats need to express their **innate behaviours** by spending time up high, observing their environment, running, jumping and pouncing. Try to organise your home so that your cat can climb onto platforms. A **cat tree** can be a great outlet for your pet – and a way to reduce potential damage to your furniture! A scratching post will **relieve their natural instinct** to claw objects (a natural marking behaviour of cats). It's also important to play with your cat daily. Get them to chase a soft toy or fish a floating object such as a ping pong ball out of water. You can also use food puzzles, such as balls that release kibbles as they roll and **make sure you leave toys around** the home when you're out.

Physical activity

Exercise is one of the most efficient ways to help **reduce the risks of obesity, respiratory problems and heart disease**. For cats, the best way to stimulate physical activity is by enriching the home environment (see above). If you own a dog, you have a whole range of options to get them active.

Walking, jogging and cycling with your dog are excellent ways to get both you and them, exercising. Playing fetch and catch are also classic ways to bond with your dog while expending energy. Have you considered **canine sports**? These activities are specifically designed to boost your dog's fitness while also improving obedience and sociability. Flyball, agility and cani-cross are just a few examples. Whatever activity you choose, remember

that the type and amount of exercise should be **tailored according to the individual pet**. Moreover, as dogs can easily overheat, consider exercising during the cooler part of the day and have an ample supply of water with you.

Providing opportunities for play is an enjoyable way to promote optimal well-being and to strengthen the bond between owner and pet. Play **provides mental stimulation** as well as exercise and is also an important way for pets to **express natural behaviours**.



Coping with heat

In hot weather, it is essential to protect your pet. **Dogs in particular** are very sensitive to heat, and overheating can have serious consequences.

Look out for tell-tale signs such as **increased panting**, heavy or **rapid breathing**, **drooling** and weakness.

In severe cases, overheating can cause bloody diarrhoea, vomiting and even seizures.

Be particularly vigilant if your pet is a **senior cat or dog** or if they have a **flat face** (Pugs, Boxers, Persian cats for example) and are therefore less efficient at panting. These animals are more at risk of the consequences of overheating.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUR PET BEAT THE HEAT:

- > Make sure they have constant **access to fresh water**. Leave several dishes of water around your home and garden.
- > Ensure your pet has as much **shade** as possible. If they are in the garden, make sure there is a shady spot. When you're out and about, try to keep your animal out of the sun.
- > Keep your pet away from **heat-absorbing surfaces** like metal or asphalt. Animals can burn their paws and the heat from their feet can also increase their core body temperature.
- > Keep **shutters and curtains shut** in extreme heat to keep the interior cool. Never leave windows open if your pet could fall out. Cats may be agile, but they can still seriously hurt themselves if they fall from a height. You can use a mosquito net to prevent your pet from jumping and still benefit from the fresh air coming in.
- > Give them a **cool bath** or let your dog swim in a cool river/lake. This will help bring down their core body temperature.
- > Consider **cutting your pet's hair** if they have a thick coat. But never shave your pets, as they need some hair to prevent overheating.
- > **Never leave your pet in a parked** vehicle. The temperature inside a car can quickly become dangerously hot, even if he is left in the shade. If the outside temperature is 35°C, the interior of a vehicle can reach 63°C within an hour. In a matter of minutes, your animal could suffer severe overheating or suffocate.



EXPOSITION TIME 	TEMPERATURE BUILD UP WITHIN A CAR IN SUMMER (IN °C)				
	20	25	30	35	40
10 MINUTES	30	35	39	43	47
20 MINUTES	36	45	49	53	57
30 MINUTES	40	49	53	57	61
40 MINUTES	42	51	55	59	63
50 MINUTES	44	53	57	61	65
60 MINUTES	46	55	59	63	67

WHY ARE DOGS SO SENSITIVE TO HEAT?

Unlike us, **cats and dogs can't cool down by sweating**. This means they must use alternative methods. Both species use **conduction**, which means lying against a cooler object, such as the tiles in your kitchen. They also use their fur to keep heat from reaching their skin. For dogs, the key method for cooling down is to **pant**, helping air to circulate through their bodies. Cats have an additional method: they **groom themselves** and the saliva from their tongue evaporates, cooling the body much like sweat.

Behavioural difficulties and signs of distress

The best way to ensure the good behaviour and **wellbeing of your pet**, is by **understanding and respecting their individual needs**.

Very often, behavioural issues and changes can be the first indicator of illness or other causes of decreased welfare. Cats are more likely to react to poor conditions by becoming inactive and inhibiting normal behaviours such as grooming and feeding rather than exhibiting obvious signs of abnormal behaviour.

Some other **common signs of stress** in both cats and dogs are diarrhoea, constipation, a poor appetite, excessive sleeping, aggression, hyperactivity or a desire to isolate themselves. Of course, these

symptoms can also have other causes, but they should trigger alarm bells. Cats may start urinating outside of their litter tray or continually meowing, as well as grooming and scratching excessively.

Try to **understand the reasons for your animal's distress**. Has there been a recent change in their environment? A new person, animal or object? Maybe they are being subjected to additional noise? Or it could be as simple as a change in their nutrition or a dirty litter tray. Cats, are very sensitive to change.

To relieve their stress, **address the root cause of the problem** if you can, and then try to spend more time with them.

Hierarchy of needs

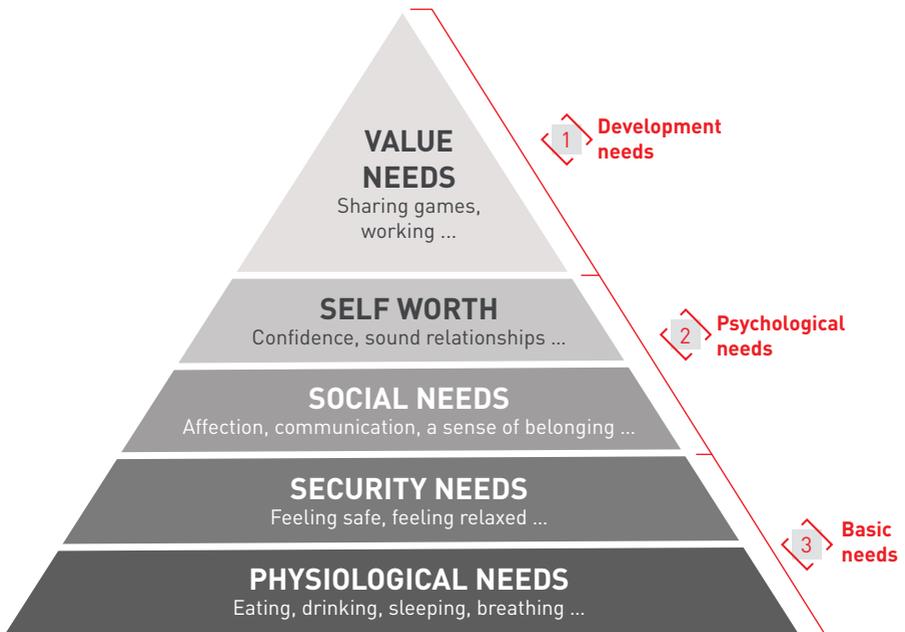
Your pet's different needs can be summarised by a pyramid of hierarchy of needs. Originally designed for humans (Maslow's pyramid), this pyramid can easily be applied to dogs and cats. The animal's most essential needs are at the bottom of the pyramid, while secondary needs are higher up. To move up the pyramid, you must first satisfy the needs on the level below.

The **most fundamental needs**, at the bottom of the pyramid, are **physiological**: sleep, nutrition, shelter, etc. Next comes safety - cats and dogs need to **feel**

secure in their environment before they can relax and form relations. Once this need is covered, they can move to the next level, **seeking love and belonging through** a trusted relationship with you and your family. Next is esteem, which comes through praise, **reward and positive reinforcement**. Finally, self-actualization is the feeling of confidence and achievement they get through succeeding in play.

It's worth keeping these different needs in mind, as the relationship with your pet develops.

PYRAMID OF THE DOG'S NEEDS



Pets in SOCIETY

THE ROLE OF PETS IN SOCIETY

Having an animal in the home is considered **beneficial on many levels** – for the pet, the owner, and the community at large.

And these benefits can increasingly be supported by robust scientific evidence.

Recent studies have shown evidence-based health benefits of pets. The power of pets has been seen to influence physical and mental health, child development and social integration.

Pets in Childhood

Studies have demonstrated that children who form strong bonds with a pet are more empathic and have stronger pro-social orientations than children who do not own pets. In addition pet ownership has been shown to decrease stress, and children who grow up with a pet are generally less prone to health issues including respiratory and ear infections. Indeed one study even showed that children from pet owning families had better school attendance. Pets are also known to help children's development and to increase their activity level. Early exposure to pets has also been found to reduce the risk of the development of both asthma and allergies later in life.

Pets in Adulthood

It's not only children though who benefit from responsible pet ownership. Comparing new pet owners to non-owners, those who acquired a pet experienced a highly-significant reduction in minor health problems during the first month of pet ownership, and these benefits were sustained over time for dog owners. The results of one study looking at survival rates in dog owners post (serious) heart attack showed that 94% of heart patients with

pets survive heart attacks, compared to 72% without pets. Results were compelling enough for the American Heart Association to issue a statement in support of the role that pet ownership - particularly of dogs - can play in reducing the risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

As well as physical health benefits, pets are a proven way to facilitate social interactions. Dog owners are also generally more active, as walking their dog is both a necessity and an enjoyable bonding activity. When you're out walking your dog, you are much more likely to chat with a neighbour or even a stranger than when you walk alone. Pets, particularly dogs are truly a social lubricant! But cats too have an important role to play; we are even hearing about "purring therapy" as the vibrations when a cat's purrs have been linked to lowering stress.



Pets and Older Adults

Pets, as well as the benefits listed above, provide older adults with a sense of security and often a 'purpose' so helping to moderate the impact of stressors on the health of older adults. Stressful life events, all too common as we age, can sometimes lead to deterioration in physical health. Pets can provide a buffer against the potential negative health consequences of bereavement, and a strong attachment to a pet has been associated with significantly less depression. Also in older adults the presence of a dog was associated with lower systolic and diastolic blood pressure during the normal daily activities suggesting that pet ownership, especially of dogs, may help to slow the progression of hypertension.

In summary, there are clear benefits ascribed to pet ownership and pet interaction across all stages of life. However, to fully enjoy the benefits of owning a pet, you'll need to undertake the responsibilities that pet ownership entails, whatever your age or stage. In fact, when you own a pet, you have duties towards your animal and towards society so that everybody lives in harmony together.

Dogs and cats are living beings whose wellbeing essentially relies on their relationship with their owner as well as their living conditions. Additionally, in order to respect the larger community, you will not only need to comply with the applicable laws but also to follow some rules of conduct that will make harmonious cohabitation possible and allow all to benefit from the role of pets in society.





YOUR PET'S LIFE IN THE CITY

Responsible pet ownership brings benefits not just for pets and their owners, but also for society as a whole. These **benefits are multi-faceted** and involve aspects of health, economics and social interaction. Conversely, irresponsible pet ownership incurs significant social cost. Cleaning up dog waste, dealing with unwanted animals and uncontrollable or aggressive dogs are common issues which can lead to negative stereotyping of pets and their owners.

Training and learning

A well-trained and socialised pet is a joy to live with. They can be **more involved in their family's life**, can be taken into other people's homes and join their owners on holiday. For dogs, this also means more freedom to be off leash in order to run, play and get more exercise when out walking, also meaning less time home alone.

A well trained and socialised pet is also easier to keep safe and helps ensure those interacting with pets are kept safe too, especially children.

From a young age, **your pet is receptive to training**. It's important to establish early on what a desirable behaviour is and what is unacceptable.

While dogs are particularly suited to training, cats tend to be considered more untrainable – but they are perfectly capable of learning certain behaviours. All it takes is patience and positive reinforcement methods.

As they are very sensitive to visual cues (body language, postures) rather than verbal cues, cats can understand what you are feeling by observing your attitude and gestures and even anticipate what you are going to do. While training your cat, use

Training your pet to behave appropriately around other people and their pets is essential, particularly for dogs.

Another **key obligation for dog owners** is cleaning up your pet's waste. Many cities impose hefty fines for owners whose dogs foul the streets.

Note also that it's usually a legal requirement for your dog to be on a lead in the city. This ensures not only the animal's safety but also that of the general public.

clear and consistent signals when communicating, in order to promote good understanding.

When training dogs, owners should be calm, consistent and make the session short and regular to ensure that the dog does not become overwhelmed or bored. The use of **positive reinforcement methods** that reward good behaviour, and ignore bad behaviour, are particularly effective in dogs. **Learning how to respond to basic commands** such as 'sit', 'lie down', 'stay', and 'back off' are important for safety, particularly when out walking. Good recall when off the lead, and good lead walking are essential behaviours for quality walking and time outdoors together.

Many countries now have puppy pre-schools where puppies can learn socialisation, and pet owners are taught how to train their puppies. There are many other training schools as well for adult dogs. Your **veterinarian can provide advice** regarding well respected puppy schools or adult dog training centres in your area.

Identification

In some countries, identification is mandatory. We **recommend you get your cat or dog at least one form of identification**. That way, you'll have a much better chance of being reunited should they get lost.

Traditionally, **tattooing** has been used. A unique number or identification code is tattooed somewhere visible on the animal, usually on the inner side of their ear.

This approach requires a general anaesthetic and is often undertaken when the animal is neutered and already anaesthetised. However, tattoos can fade over time and may be difficult to see on long-haired cats or dogs, and so are very rarely used nowadays.

Today, **microchipping** is by far **the most common method of pet identification**. This consists of inserting a microchip under the animal's skin, a simple procedure that is relatively pain-free and requires no anaesthetic. A handheld scanner can then be used to read the unique number in the chip. Both microchipping and tattooing rely on the authorities compiling a **database of identification numbers**, which can then be consulted if the animal is found.

In some cities dogs and cats also need to be registered with a local council. The owner pays a registration fee and a registration/identification tag can be placed on the collar.





Pet-friendly cities

In Amsterdam, all public transport is free for pets. In Austin, Texas, there are a dozen off-leash parks for dogs. And in Rome, you'll find plenty of pet-friendly restaurants and cafés. Today, many cities are adapting to pet owners to create a more animal-friendly society.

A pet-friendly city has the following traits:

- > pet needs are included in green space, park and city planning,
- > pet hydration and waste stations are plentiful and easy to find,

Pets in the workplace

Many dog owners would like to **take their dog to work** rather than leave them at home alone. And indeed, research shows that bringing pets to the workplace can have a **positive impact on staff and productivity**. By implementing a **pet-friendly policy**, companies help promote loyalty among pet owners, boost employee morale, reduce stress and guilt, and help to readdress work-life balance. These benefits can reduce absenteeism while boosting job satisfaction and productivity.

Pet-friendly offices are still relatively rare, but they are becoming more common. The key to successfully introducing pets to the workplace is to have a clear, well-structured policy.

- > amenities for pets and owners are available,
- > people know the expectations for pets in public places,
- > retailers, hotels and restaurants make it easy to be out with a pet,
- > travelling with pets is accessible, safe and affordable,
- > companies allow pets in their workplace,
- > shelters are warm and welcoming to encourage adoption.

This policy should cover required vaccinations and parasite control, outline facilities available to pets (areas for meal preparation, sleeping and exercising) and include insurance for animals in the workplace. Pet-friendly offices can only succeed if owners respect the policy, take responsibility for their pets and are considerate to colleagues with allergies.

If you take your dog to work with you, make sure they are well-exercised before arriving and provide them with a toy to play with throughout the day.

ON THE MOVE

Travelling with your pet

Whether you're **taking your pet on holiday** or just travelling to the next city, you'll need to make the right preparations for their health and safety. Travelling abroad and/or by air **can require visits to the vet and significant paperwork**, so you will need to plan ahead.

If you're planning on driving with your cat or dog, you'll need to secure them while you're moving. For cats, a travel carrier is a good solution. Make sure you position it out of direct sunlight. For dogs, you can buy a car harness that combines with a seatbelt to keep your pet safely in the back seat. Other options for smaller dogs include travel crates and booster seats. Dogs are particularly sensitive to heat, so make sure you watch out for signs of overheating (see p.27). You should also stop regularly to allow your dog to stretch and have a toilet break.

Taking your pet on the plane **requires preparation**, especially if you're flying to another country. Find out in advance about the specific requirements of the airline and your destination country, as well as your return country. Airlines may have age restrictions and regulations about the size and type of pet carriers, while many countries require your pet to be microchipped and vaccinated against certain diseases. Rabies-free countries may also demand a blood titer test to measure your pet's antibodies.

Make sure you find out about quarantine regulations and if you need a pet passport. **Within the European Union, a pet passport is necessary to ensure your animal can travel freely.**



Leaving your pet behind

Sometimes your cat or dog is better off staying in or near your home, especially if you're travelling long distances. **So, what are your options for leaving your pet behind?**

> **Kennels and catteries:** boarding kennels/catteries are a practical and reassuring solution since it is a service provided by professionals with suitable facilities. In the summer, the best kennels/catteries get booked up early so plan ahead. You should **always visit potential kennels/catteries ahead of your trip** to assess their cleanliness, safety and to observe the wellbeing of animals in their care.

> **Friends and family:** getting a trusted member of your family to look after your pet can be a great solution. Make sure the person understands the responsibilities this entails and that they have the time to give your pet the necessary attention. You should also give them advice on how to make their home animal-friendly if your pet will be living with them. Ideally, your cat or dog should already know the friend or family member.

> **Pet-sitting:** some pet-sitters are professionals who will take your pet into their home in return for pay. Others will come and live in your home to look after your pet. Because they are using your house, this type of pet-sitter will usually demand less or no financial remuneration. You can place an ad in a local paper or try to find a pet-sitter through specialist websites. Some websites offer extra guarantees, such as emergency medical insurance for your pet. Always check the references of your pet-sitter.

ABANDONED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Every summer, there are cases of **pet owners leaving their animals** behind unattended while they go on holiday. As well as being irresponsible and potentially life-threatening for the animal, such an act is punishable by law in many countries.



PRECAUTIONS YOU SHOULD TAKE

Animals can sometimes **behave in unpredictable ways**. Being a pet owner is all about developing an **understanding of your cat or dog**, but this can take time.

Especially in the early stages of acquiring your animal, you should be careful about introducing them to strangers. Children often don't understand that animals may behave aggressively if they feel threatened or are not ready for attention. As a general rule, you should always be present when your pet is with children.

Never force your pet to do anything they don't want to do. Don't stroke or try to play with an animal if they are not willing. This is especially true for cats and younger animals, who may get scared and react aggressively. **Look for signs in their body language** that they are relaxed and willing to interact.

Remember to always keep your dog on a lead in urban areas, unless otherwise indicated.





INTERPRETING YOUR PET'S LANGUAGE AND BEHAVIOUR

Your cat or dog communicates with you all the time. **Learning to read their body language and noises will help you understand them** – which means you'll be able to better answer their needs. Your pet will be happier and you'll be able to build a stronger relationship with them.

Understanding your cat

Cats usually only understand a few key words, but they are very sensitive to your attitude and tone of

voice. They sense emotions and can anticipate what you will do next. Watch carefully and you'll see your cat is communicating back.

You can learn a lot from studying your cat's head. Pricked-up ears and narrow eyes suggest anger, while squinting eyes and ears facing forward are a sign of happiness. Cats use their whiskers to express themselves and explore, so never cut your cat's whiskers.



EARS ERECT,
facing forward,
eyes round:
neutral cat



EARS PRICKED UP,
turned to the side,
eyes narrowed:
angry cat



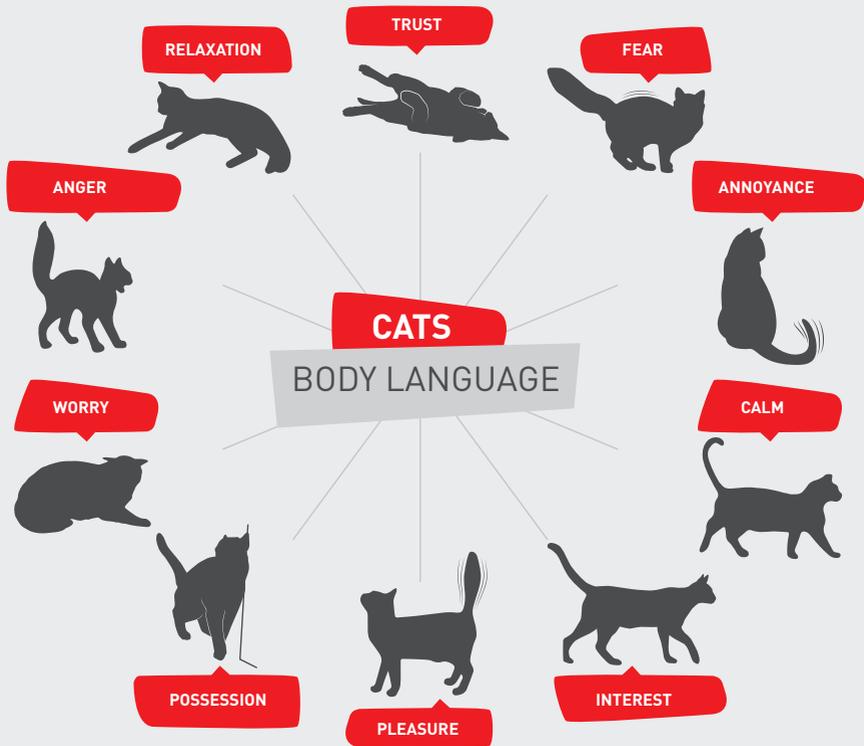
EARS FLATTENED,
round, dilated pupils:
aggressive cat



EARS FACING FORWARD,
erect, eyes squinting,
slit pupils:
happy cat

Your cat's **body language** is also revealing.

- > **Rubbing their head or tail against your legs** is a sign of affection: your cat is sharing their scent with you.
- > If your cat **rolls on the ground** as soon as they see you, it's a sign of submission that shows they feel at ease.
- > A **swishing of the tail** usually signals restlessness or agitation. Unlike dogs, this is not a sign of happiness.



The **sounds** your cat makes are also ways of communicating with you.

- > **Purring** usually means contentment. If your cat purrs with you, they are letting you know they are satisfied. But a cat who purrs alone may be trying to relieve stress or anxiety.
- > **Growling and hissing** are meant to intimidate you. Your cat is probably feeling threatened.
- > **Meowing** is motivated by a variety of reasons: your cat may be demanding something, complaining or expressing confusion or refusal.

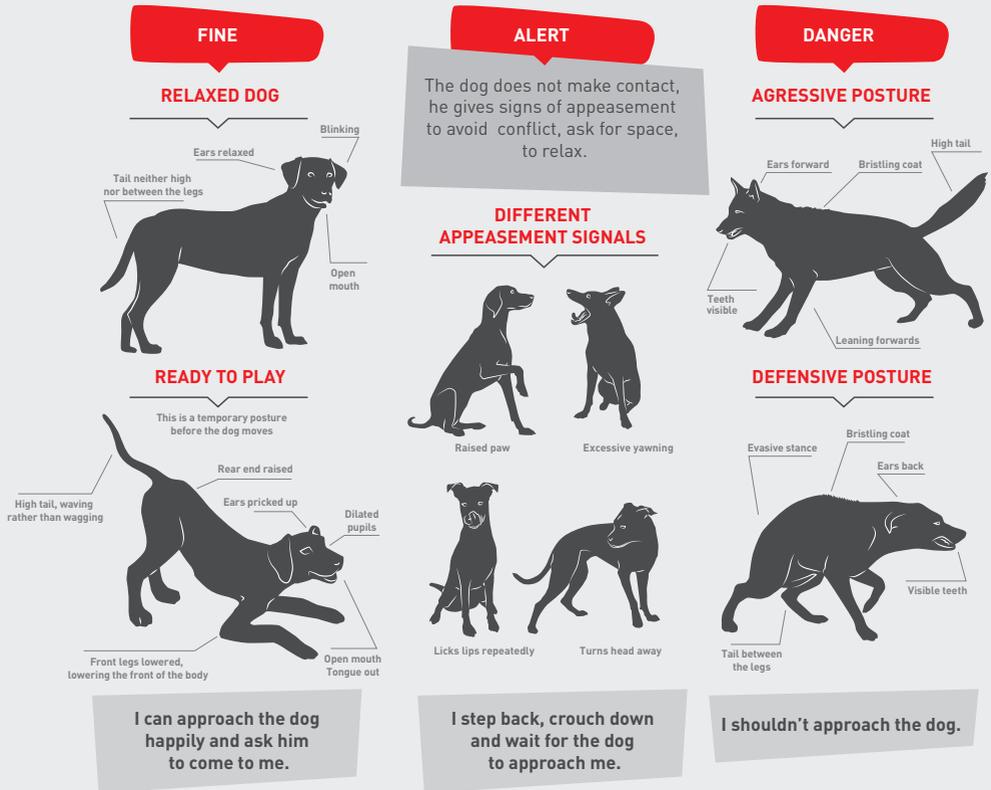


Understanding your dog

Similarly to cats, dogs use noises and body language to express themselves.

Your dog's **position and posture** are a key way to understand them. You probably already know that tail-wagging indicates happiness, but what about other emotions?

If your dog lies on their back with their tail between the legs, they are being submissive. If they crouch low down with ears laid flat on the head and the tail drooping between their legs, they are frightened or stressed.



The way your dog **barks** also expresses what they are feeling.

- > Regular, long barks that sound sad or sorrowful are a sign of **boredom**.
- > A dull growl or bark that may develop into a howl means your dog is feeling **threatened**.
- > A stuttering bark that stops and starts regularly is a sign your dog **wants to play**.

Conclusion

Be a responsible pet owner

You should now have a good idea about how to be a responsible pet owner. **Now it's up to you to put theory into practice!**

When you welcome a new pet into your home, you put their wellbeing in your hands. Being a pet owner is a long-term commitment and, by following the advice in this guide, you should ensure their continued health and happiness. This will allow you and your pet to enjoy a rewarding and long lasting relationship.



A better world for pets 

