

All About Pets

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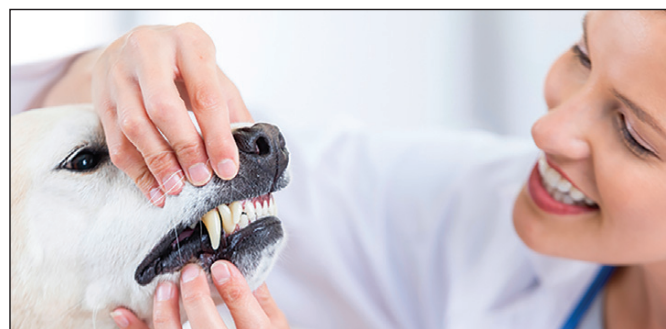
Make vet visits easier for all involved

People often get anxious about visiting the doctor, and the same can be said for pets. According to the online animal resource Top Dog Tips, a lot of dogs and cats have serious anxiety about going to the vet.

Veterinarian visits typically happen once per year, and the earlier your pet can become more comfortable and acclimated to the process, the better it will behave during each subsequent visit. The following are some steps pet owners can take to make vet visits go smoothly.

- **Handle your pet frequently.** Teach your pet to accept touching of the paws, ears, mouth, tail, legs, and stomach. Regular sessions petting and touching your pet may make him or her more comfortable when the vet has to do so.

- **Consider waiting outside.** Research from Companion Animal Psychology says 30 percent of dogs are highly stressed while sitting in the waiting room of the vet's office. It can be hectic in the waiting room, with lots of new smells, people coming in and out and ani-



mals with all sorts of energy. If waiting rooms put your pet on edge, wait outside.

- **Associate the carrier with comfort.** If you pull out the crate only when the pet will be going to the vet, the animal will soon associate it with negative experiences. Instead, use the crate frequently and rely on treats so that the dog or cat sees it as a safe and fun space to spend its time. Take frequent car rides to different destinations so pets don't associate car rides with vet visits.

- **Find the right veterinarian.** Interview several vets to find an office and staff who love interacting with your pet and can make him or her comfortable.

- **Stay relaxed yourself.** Pets can sense their owner's energy. If you are worked up and anxious, then your animal may feed off of those feelings. By remaining calm, you can help keep your pet calm.

- **Do a fun or practice visit.** Acclimate the pet to the vet's office with a trial run. This way he or she can interact with the vet and learn the smells and sounds under less stressful conditions. This is a great way for the pet to have a positive initial experience with its new vet.

Vet visits are vital to pets' long-term health. Setting the stage for positive experiences early on can make visits go smoothly throughout the pet's life.

Signs your pet may be in pain

Pet owners go to great lengths to treat their animals well. When a pet is ill, the animal may exhibit signs of anxiety and upset. However, sometimes it is not so easy to detect that something is awry with a pet, even if the animal is in pain.

Companion animals descend from wild animals and it is important for wild animals' survival that they do not display signs of physical weakness. In a domestic setting, pets may hold onto some of these inherent traits, which can make it challenging for pet owners to know when the animal is feeling poorly. Cats are very stoic and it can be easy for humans to miss signs of discomfort or pain, according to Pam Johnson-Bennet, a cat behavior expert and author of several books on cats. Even dogs may not exhibit signs of pain or illness.

By learning to pick up on some cues, pet owners can determine if it is time to

make a vet appointment.

- **Lack of appetite:** A lack of appetite might be a sign of various medical conditions or that a pet is in pain. If the animal is normally a chowhound but suddenly he or she is skipping meals or turning up his or her nose at the bowl, be sure to alert the veterinarian, especially if this behavior continues for more than a few days, especially if water is being refused as well.

- **Irritability:** Cats in pain may be uncharacteristically aggressive, even growling or hissing when other pets or people in the household approach. Dogs, too, may try to avoid contact or even become aggressive. Any noticeable changes in normal behavior can be a cause for concern.

- **Increased sleep:** Pets in pain may sleep more as they try to heal or find it difficult to move around. Shifting positions, hunching and disinterest in chasing toys are other indicators that pets are in pain.

- **Vocalizations:** Both dogs and cats in pain may make be more vocal, either meowing, yelping, growling, or howling to indicate something is not right.

- **Excessive grooming:** The animal resource VetsNow says that if grooming seems excessive or centralized to a spot on the body, it may be the pet's attempt to soothe.

- **Panting or altered breathing:** A dog or cat who is breathing heavily while at rest may have an underlying illness and pain.

- **Potty changes:** Cats may miss the litter box or choose not to use it if they're in pain. Dogs that are ill may have accidents indoors or need to go out more frequently, even if they are house trained.

Those who suspect their pets may be in pain can consult with a veterinarian and monitor symptoms carefully. Do not attempt to offer pain medication without first receiving professional advice.



Guide to adopting a shelter pet

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a lot of changes to daily life. One of the positive effects of COVID-19 is that many individuals have turned to pets to tame loneliness or bring some brightness into their lives amidst all the uncertainty and turbulence.

In April 2020, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals said applications to foster dogs and cats was up 200 percent. In addition, PetPoint, a software system shared by shelters nationwide, reported fostering and adoptions were up by 700 percent since 2019. A TD Ameritrade survey found 33 percent of Americans have considered fostering or adopting a furry friend during the pandemic.

While it may be tempting



to rush out and adopt a pet right away, careful consideration must be given before bringing a new pet into a home.

Expense

One of the biggest considerations is cost. The TD Ameritrade survey found that dog owners spend up to \$1,201 a year on their pets, while cat owners spend up

to \$687 per year on average. Food costs top the list of pet expenditures, followed by veterinary care and grooming.

Lifestyle

Another aspect to consider is if a certain animal will fit its prospective owners' lifestyles. Outdoor enthusiasts and physically active people may want an exercise buddy, so a high-energy dog breed may fit the mold. Those who want a cuddling companion or lap warmer may opt for a less active dog or a cat.

Research the pet

It is important to learn the care needs of specific pets, particularly among breeds of cats and dogs. For example, certain dogs may fit best with one person and

not take to a household full of kids. Some breeds need ample outdoor space to run around, while others may be content to be couch potatoes.

Another consideration is temperament and the animal's history. Some rescues come from abusive situations or may have spent years on the street, so owners must be ready to help such dogs adjust to more loving environments. It's important to ask how the pet came to be in the shelter. All considerations need to be factored into the equation.

Learn the adoption process

Each shelter or rescue organization has its own rules and regulations for adoption, including fees

they charge by way of a donation. According to the pet resource Top Dog Tips, a shelter needs to be sure that adoptive pet parents will be able to care for the pet. An extensive questionnaire and a potential home visit may be part of the application process. Veterinarian references, age restrictions (adoptive pet parents are often 21 years or older) and permission from a landlord if one rents will be needed. Some rescues have stipulations regarding fenced yards. Some shelters even insist on a disclaimer that they reserve the right to remove the pet if they feel the animal is not being properly cared for.

Pet adoption should always include careful consideration of a wide range of factors.

Exploring guinea pigs as pets

Impulsive decisions with regard to family pets can be disastrous. Prospective pet parents who do not take the time to decide if pets fit their lifestyles before taking one home may end up regretting their decisions and/or returning the animal, which can be hard on pets and families alike.

Many prospective pet parents may recognize the commitments that large pets like dogs require. But some may mistakenly believe that small pets, such as guinea pigs, are much easier to care for than cats or dogs. That false impression may compel them to adopt guinea pigs without fully exploring just what it takes to raise these small, personable pets.

Time commitment

Just because guinea pigs don't need daily walks around the neighborhood does not mean they don't require a substantial commitment of time on the part of their owners. According to the Humane Society of the United States, daily interaction with and attention from their owners is essential for the well-being of guinea pigs.

People considering guinea pigs as pets also should know that guinea



pigs require regular grooming, including daily grooming for long-haired breeds.

Guinea pigs' cages also must be meticulously maintained. The HSUS recommends thorough weekly cleanings as well as spot-cleaning every few days.

Children

Many parents presume guinea pigs will make great first pets for their children. While that may be true, the HSUS points out that young children often lack self-restraint and fine motor control. That can make kids more likely to mishandle guinea pigs, increasing their risk of dropping or squeezing the animals. Some guinea pigs may

respond to being mishandled with fear that leads them to bite their handlers. When considering guinea pigs as pets, parents should keep in mind that guinea pigs respond most favorably to being gently held.

Companionship

Guinea pigs are social animals, and the HSUS advises that they do best with the companionship of another pig. Solitary guinea pigs can quickly grow lonely and bored, which can be problematic for pet parents whose time is already stretched thin.

Allergies

Before adopting guinea pigs, prospective owners

should confirm that they and members of their household are not allergic to the animals. Visit an animal shelter or the home of a friend with guinea pigs and spend some time with the animal in the room where it spends most of its time. Handle the animals and take note of any potential indicators that you might be allergic. If you suspect you or a member of your household is allergic, contact an allergist for further testing or discussion.

Guinea pigs make great pets, but prospective guinea pig owners should do their homework before bringing these lovable creatures home.

Prevent lost pets with these simple tips

No pet parent wants their pets to escape the house, car or yard and become lost. But curious pets have a way of getting out on their own, which not even the most watchful pet owners can always prevent.

The American Humane Association estimates that more than 10 million dogs and cats are lost or stolen in the United States every year. One in three pets will become lost at some point during its life. While it is impossible to prevent every situation that may lead to a lost pet, pet owners can take some simple preventative steps to keep pets from becoming lost.

Identify the pet

Pets should wear some form of identification, which will differ based on the animal. For example, a dog can wear a collar and a name tag. A homing pigeon or other bird may have a numbered ankle band. Many pet owners choose to microchip their pets. These small devices are implanted under the skin and can be read by a special electronic wand. If you microchip your pet, it is essential to keep your contact information associated with the chip updated.

Track the pet

GPS-based devices can be used to locate a pet if it gets out of the house. Much like the tracking devices in phones and watches, small tags can be placed on the pet's collar and be tracked through an app on the owner's phone or another device.

Provide a secure space

Pets need a secure, supervised area to exercise. Fencing needs to be tall enough to prevent pets from jumping over it. Make sure pets cannot dig under the fence and that fence gates are always latched tightly. Self-latching fence gates can be handy.

Indoors, be sure to close doors promptly when exiting and entering the house. Be mindful of pets trying to escape.

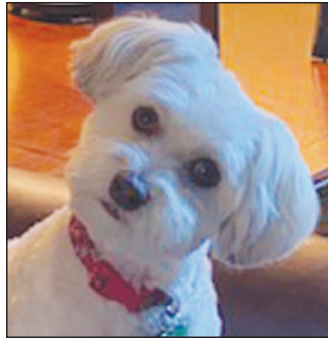
Use a leash or carrier

When the pet is taken out of the house, he or she should be leashed or secured in an animal carrier. Many pets have a strong prey instinct and love to chase animals. Keeping pets close by can keep them from getting lost or injured.

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Ariel
Waukesha



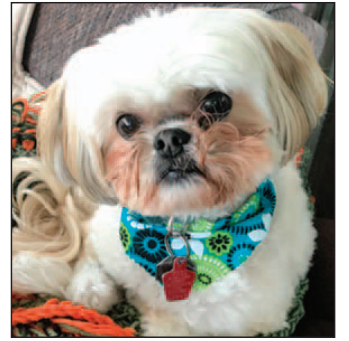
Bailey
Summit



Bella & Rashad
Pewaukee



Bourne, Siobhan, Liam & Brenna
Waukesha



Brady
North Prairie



Bud
Waukesha



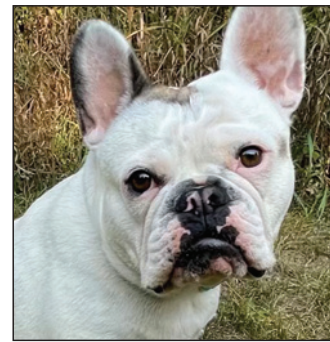
Buddy Best
Waukesha



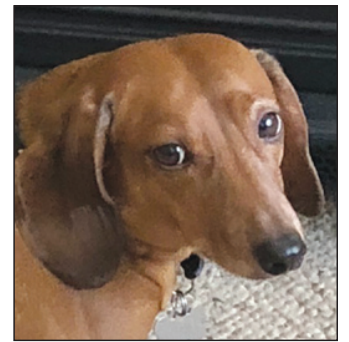
Carlee
Pewaukee



Cassie
Muskego



Chimi
Mukwonago



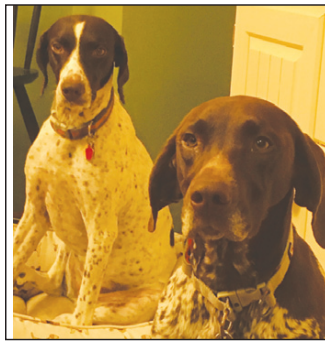
Clarence
Waukesha



Cody
Menomonee Falls



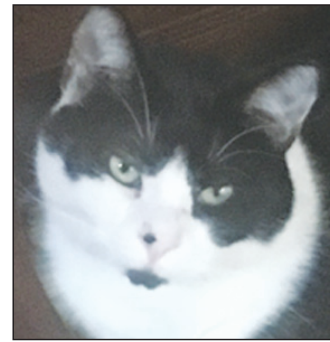
Colonel Mustard
Waukesha



Dixie & Royal
Waukesha



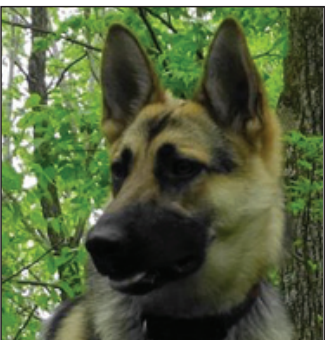
Emma
Richfield



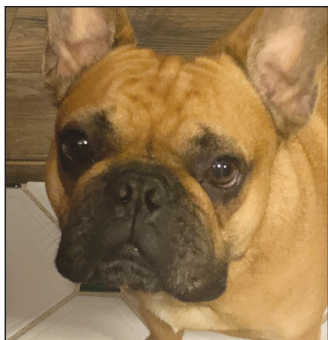
Felix
Pewaukee



Finn
Oconomowoc



Franny
Mukwonago



Gordon
Oconomowoc



Grizzly
Waukesha



Jack
Brookfield

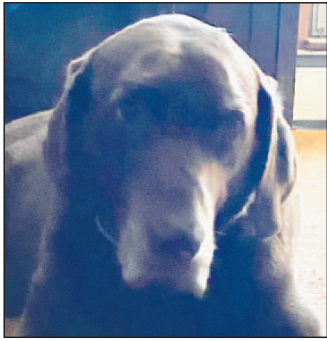


Jack
Brookfield

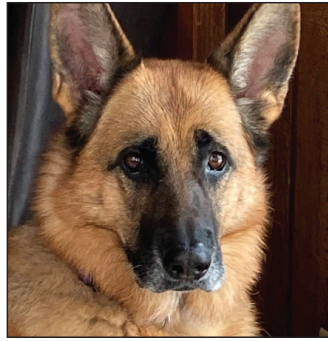


Jewels
Pewaukee

WALL OF FAME



KC
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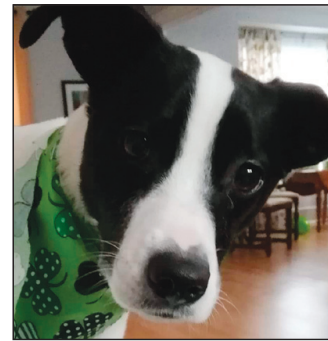
Kinzie
New Berlin



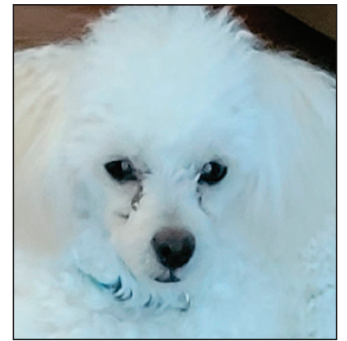
Lucy
Menomonee Falls



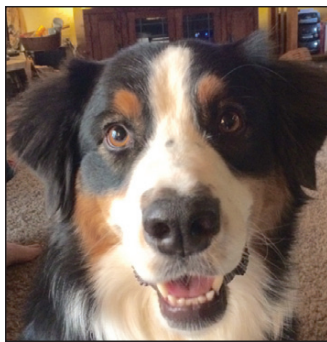
Mila
Waukesha



Murphy
Waukesha



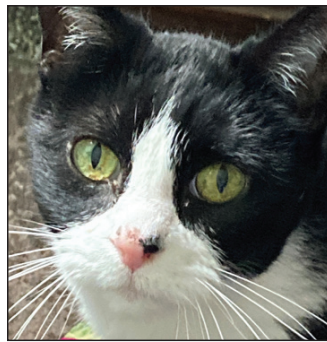
Niko
Mukwonago



Olaf
Oconomowoc



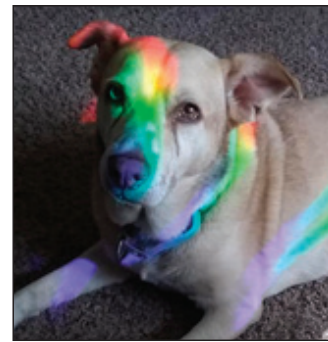
Oscar
Oconomowoc



Prancer
Waukesha



Quiggley
Waukesha



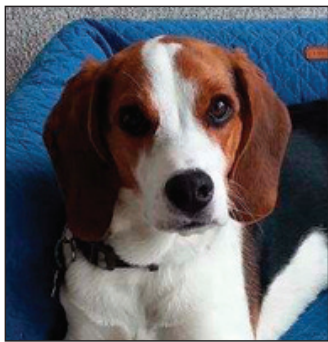
Rainbow Lainey
Mukwonago



Rhiannon
Pewaukee



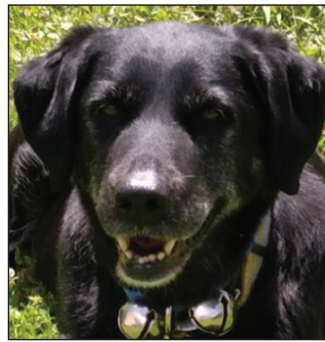
Rhyleigh
Oconomowoc



Ruger
Mukwonago



Shaggy
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Securing a trustworthy pet sitter



Welcoming a pet of any kind into a home can be a lesson in love as well as one in responsibility. Pet owners must take various steps to ensure the safety and well-being of a companion animal, and that includes providing for that animal while on vacation.

How long pets can remain at home alone depends on the pet, its age and its overall health. For example, an aquarium full of fish may be able to thrive for a week with the assistance of an automatic feeder. Dogs,

however, will need daily bathroom breaks and feedings, says the Animal Humane Society. Adult dogs may be able to "hold it" for 10 to 12 hours, but young puppies and elderly dogs likely need more frequent breaks outside.

Feeding and cleaning up pet waste is not the only consideration. Some animals require much more socialization than others.

Pet sitters can address pets' needs while their owners are away. But finding one that will care for a pet like he or she is a member of the family can take some time and effort. Hill's Pet Nutrition suggests beginning the process of finding a pet sitter by making a list of needs. Considerations to include are whether the pet sitter should be in one's home or if the pet is to be brought to a pet care facility or a private sitter's residence. The pet may have particular health care requirements that also need to be addressed, such as a dog who requires insulin shots for diabetes.

While friends and family may be the first choices as pet sitters, there are benefits to using professional pet sitters. A professional sitter is properly trained in the care of many different animals, according to Pet Sitters International. He or she may have a local business license and be insured and bonded. Professional sitters are likely to make the pet a priority more than hobbyists or well-meaning acquaintances because caring for pets is how they earn their livings.

Personal recommendations can be an effective means to finding reliable pet sitters. Pet owners can interview candidates, asking questions about experience with this type of pet, how he or she handles the breed and temperament, and what the plan might be if the pet gets sick or injured while in the pet sitter's care.

Pet sitters provide valuable services when pet owners are away from home. Vetting pet sitters takes a little time, but that effort is well worth it.



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The growing problem of pet obesity

Many pet owners would never intentionally harm their companion animals. In fact, pet owners often go above and beyond to ensure their animals are well cared for and content. However, many well-meaning people may be inadvertently harming their pets with something they provide each and every day: food.

Obesity is on the rise among pets. The Association for Pet Obesity Prevention says that 54 percent of dogs and 59 percent of cats in the United States were categorized as overweight or obese in 2016. That marks an increase from 52.5 percent and 58.3 percent, respectively, from four years ago. The majority of veterinarians think that pet obesity is a significant problem and nearly half of pet owners admit that their vets have discussed a pet's ideal weight with them during pet health visits.

Pet weight and appearance

Body weights for pets are based on breed ideals and may not necessarily apply to

dogs and cats of mixed breeds. For example, a golden retriever should weigh between 65 and 75 pounds. A domestic cat should weigh between eight and 10 pounds. But vets will consider a host of variables to determine if a given pet is a healthy weight.

Vets advise that dog owners should be able to easily feel and count dogs' ribs when they run their fingers across the side of the animal. Pets viewed from above should display an hourglass figure that includes an indentation near the midsection. The absence of this "waist" may indicate a problem. When observing a pet from the side while he or she is standing, a slight upward slope of the stomach should be visible. A low-hanging abdomen means abdominal fat may be present.

Health problems related to weight

The Purina Pet Care Center found that overweight pets may live two years less than ideal weight pets. Reduced life span is

not the only problem, as carrying extra pounds can contribute to various maladies. These include osteoarthritis and poor joint health, type 2 diabetes, ligament injuries, heart and respiratory disease, kidney disease, and cancer.

Exercise and food

Just like humans, pets need a combination of physical activity and caloric moderation to maintain healthy weights. Daily caloric needs for indoor cats range from 180 to 200 calories per day. The larger a dog is, the more calories it needs.

Pet owners should work with their veterinarians to map out a diet and exercise regimen that can help their overweight pets shed pounds. Vets also can help determine if weight gain is due to illness or food habits.

Pets need to maintain healthy diets and engage in exercise to maintain ideal body weights that will keep them healthy for years to come.

Selecting an easier-to-train dog breed

Training is one of the most effective ways to keep companion animals safe and secure. When prospective pet owners begin looking for a new dog, one of the first thoughts that may come to mind is trainability and whether certain breeds are more readily trainable than others.

The pet food manufacturers at Honest Kitchen indicate that many factors can make a difference in how easily a dog will train, and breed is just one of them. Certain traits can suggest trainability, but how the animal was bred, raised and socialized can affect how well a dog takes to training as well.

The American Kennel Club reports that certain dogs are more willing to comply with owner requests, while others are bred to work independently and may be less likely to immediately respond to commands from their owners.

Certain traits can make some dogs a little easier to train than others. For exam-

ple, dogs that are food-motivated and enjoy being around people may be more easily trained than those without such traits. Though there's no guarantee any dog will take to training, the following are some breeds that are generally considered training-friendly.

- **Border collies:** Collies are bright and energetic dogs that like to herd with their agility and intelligence.

- **Australian shepherd:** Another herding dog, Aussies have a natural focus on their owners and are bred to work with those owners in challenging environments.

- **Doberman pinchers:** Dobermans are smart and attentive to their owners. They have traditionally been employed as guard dogs and require careful training and socialization to be tolerant of strangers.

- **German shepherds:** These workhorses serve many different roles because of their affinity for learning tasks. Like Dobermans, look for a well-

socialized German shepherd to avoid anxiety and wariness with people.

- **Poodles:** Poodles are popular because they don't shed much, but also because they are an intelligent, obedient and versatile breed.

- **Golden retrievers:** Golden retrievers are not the No. 1 family dog for nothing. Golden retrievers are very intelligent and amiable. They often will do anything to please their owners. Labrador retrievers also take to training well and are very affectionate.

- **Papillon:** Smaller dogs are often dubbed "stubborn" or "independent." But papillons are incredibly smart and trainable and are naturally focused.

The pet advisement site K9 of Mine warns that some of the smartest, most easily trained dogs may not necessarily be the easiest to live with. They can get bored easily and destroy things around the house if they can't keep their minds occupied. This is a factor to consider when selecting a breed as well.



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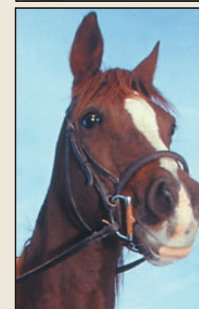
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Adopting a new cat? 5 tips for new cat parents

Welcoming a new cat or kitten into your home is an exciting event. However, like any new experience, it can feel daunting to prepare your home for your new furry family member. Now is the peak season for finding kittens and adult cats available for adoption, as it's the height of the kitten season. And of course, there are always wonderful adult and senior cats in need of forever homes, all year round.

Cats make excellent pets, especially for those who live in apartments or other areas with limited green space, which would be needed for a dog. Cats are also an excellent option for those with limited mobility who are in need of companionship. If you are considering opening your home to a new cat, here are some tips to help make the transition easier - both for you and for them.

1. Prep your home ahead of time

Before you go to pick up your new cat or kitten,

make sure you're all set up with the appropriate supplies. Here is a quick checklist of things to do and buy:

- Crate or carrier to safely bring home your new feline friend
- Food dish and appropriate food for your kitten or adult cat
- Water dish
- Quiet area to set up food and water
- Litter box, litter scoop and litter (if you have more than one cat, supply one box per cat so they have adequate space)
- Cats are very curious, so remove breakables on shelves or tables that cats could access

• Make sure you have no ductwork, HVAC registers or other holes that could be hazardous - or cover them up.

2. Choose a "starting room"

When you first introduce your cat to their new home, pick one room to isolate them for a few days so they can slowly get used to the new sights, sounds and



smells of your home. It should be the same room where their litter box is kept, so they'll know that location from the start. Make sure to supply your new furry friend with clean water and food.

After a few days in the starting room, gradually open up more rooms of the house so your cat can explore. If you're introducing them to other animals in the house, do so very gradually. Let them get used to

each other's smells first by swapping rooms for several days, before allowing any supervised face-to-face interactions.

3. Offer them a cozy hideout

Cats love small, enclosed places where they'll feel safe and secure. You can leave a cat carrier open or supply a cardboard box or covered cat bed. Make sure the box or carrier is big enough for the cat to stand up and move

around in. Put down a soft blanket or towel to make the box comfy.

If possible, position the box or carrier so it faces the door to the room. That way they won't be startled by people or other pets entering.

4. Set up their first vet appointment

After adopting a new cat, it's always a good idea to have it checked out by a veterinarian as soon as possi-

ble. You'll want to immediately get a sense of health issues and any special care that may be required. If your cat is adopted from an animal shelter, they may have recommendations for vets in your area.

5. Let them come to you

A new cat will likely be nervous at first. Give them time to become accustomed to their surroundings without rushing them or pushing them to be affectionate. If you're quiet and still, they are more likely to come out and visit. Teach your children to wait patiently for the cat to come to them - and they will be rewarded over time. If your children aren't used to cats, make sure to supervise them the first few weeks.

You can gently coax your cat to interact with a fun feather toy or tempting treats, and it won't be too long before they're ready to socialize - and to show you how happy they are to be living in their welcoming new home.

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