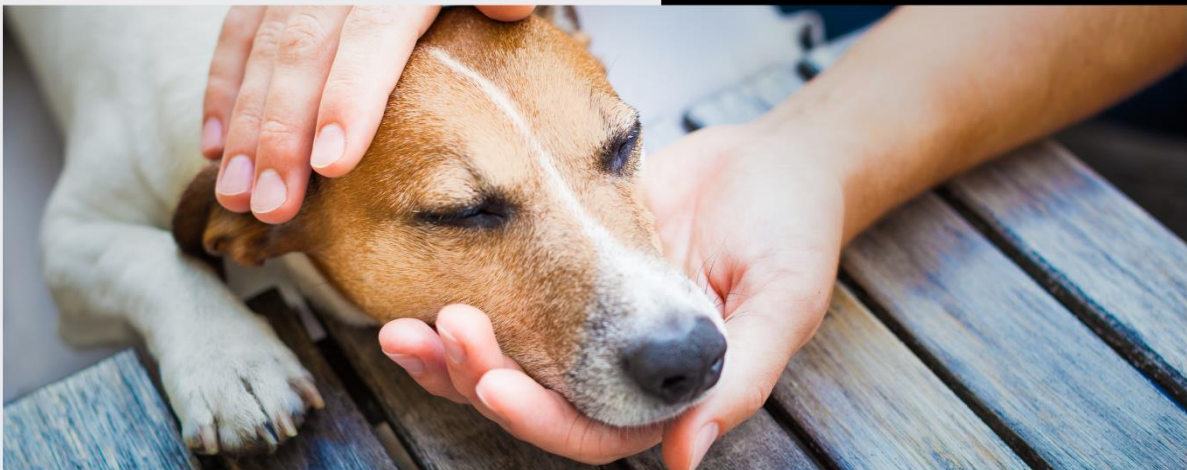


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# RESPONSIBLE PET OWNER'S GUIDE TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS AT HOME

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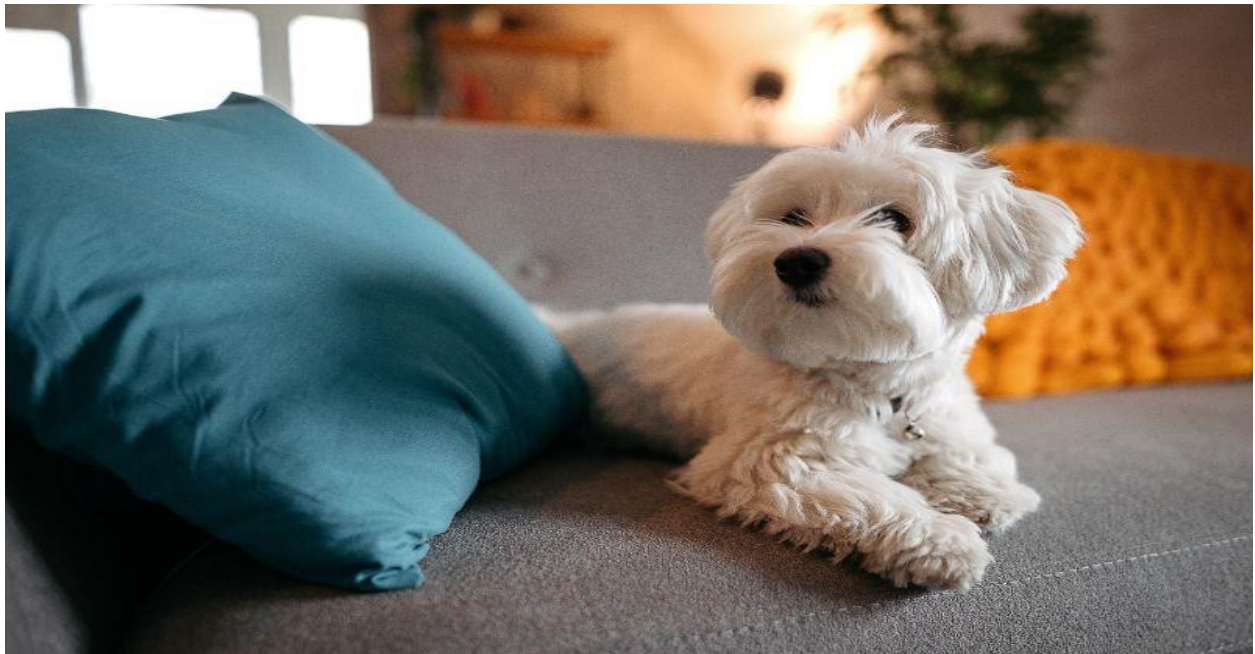
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## **Abstract**

As a loving pet owner, you always want the best for your furry friend. There are many ways to demonstrate your affection, from providing nutritious food and tasty treats to comfortable beds and fun toys. However, you can also promote your pet's health and wellbeing by making a few easy adjustments to your home environment. Below are some guidelines to help keep your beloved companion happy and healthy.



## **Getting Started**

### ***Why Pets Are So Important***

Whether it's a fish, a horse, or anything in between, a pet is a pet. They're there for you when you're happy or sad, through all of life's journeys and obstacles, and they're happy to do it. Animals have proven to be hugely beneficial, especially for empty nesters, children, and individuals dealing with mental and physical disabilities.

For example, owning a dog can help with physical activity literally on a daily basis. Dogs are active, and love to explore the world around them. Taking them for walks to the dog park or even just around your neighborhood is good exercise for the both of you. They can also help with mental processes, even



just by being in the same room as you. No matter what animal you choose to bring in to your life, it's a companion.



Pets provide us with loyalty, companionship, love, and affection, as well as the many physical and mental benefits. They can make our lives feel fuller and happier than ever, teaching us and making us happier and better without even knowing it. The love of an animal is unconditional.

### **Responsible Pet Ownership**

Pets are great company, and are loyal friends. They not only bring an innocent joy into our lives, but the human-animal bond is a deeply personal and mutually beneficial experience.

Owning a pet is a lifelong responsibility but there are many positive benefits. Pets really can make us physically and mentally healthier. It is well documented that the bond between people and their pets can increase fitness and immunity, reduce stress and loneliness, and bring happiness to their owners. They can help us feel safe while we're home alone.

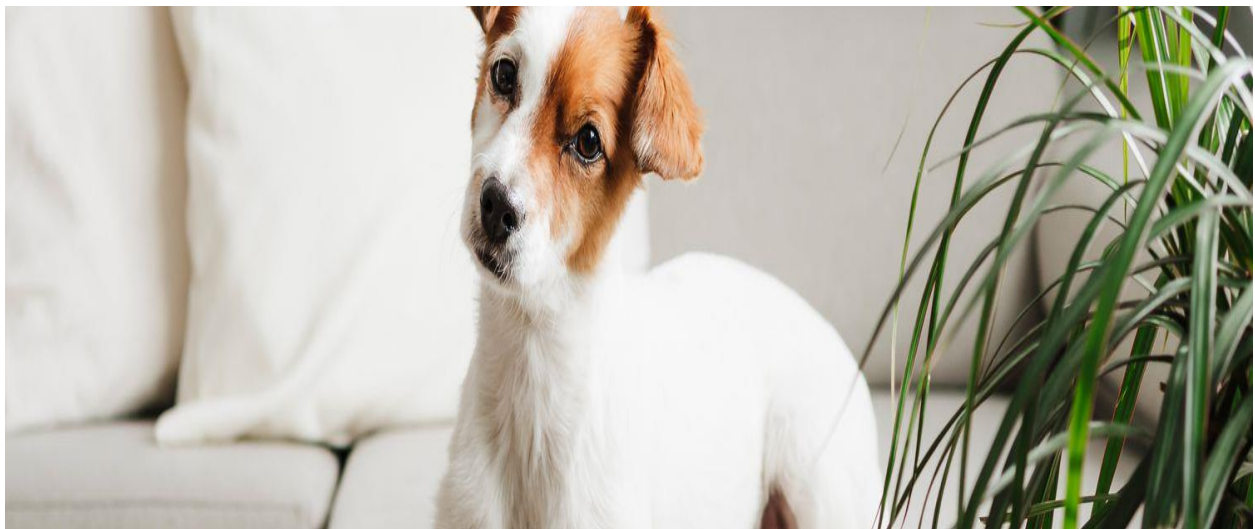


Pets also benefit from having their own human. They enjoy a personal daily caregiver, a safe home, and longer lifespans than their homeless cousins. A recent study has shown that the stronger the human-animal bond is, the better veterinary and preventative care that animal will receive in its lifetime.

Choosing the right pet is key to ensuing a strong bond and lifelong commitment to our animals. The pull of love at first sight when we meet a cute fluff-ball can be very powerful, but being a responsible pet owner means earnestly considering whether we are a good fit for our new pet as much as they are for us before committing to taking them home.

- **Pick the Right Pet**

It is your responsibility as a pet owner to thoroughly research the basic requirements of your chosen pet, and it's important to do this before bringing your pet home so that you are well informed about the specific needs of your new pet. It's also important to understand that owning a pet is a lifelong commitment. Depending on the breed, health and lifestyle, cats can live for 15-20 years, dogs for 10-20 years and birds for up to 80 years. Companion animals thrive on human company and will always depend on you. You should also consider:



- ✓ your working hours
- ✓ your social life
- ✓ the time you spend away from home, including holidays
- ✓ whether you are prepared to walk a dog every day
- ✓ whether you are home often enough to keep a cat company
- ✓ who will care for your pet when you are away from home

Pets also need to be:

- ✓ fed and watered
- ✓ stimulated and exercise – all pets need species appropriate daily stimulation and exercise
- ✓ given access to appropriate shelter when in the yard
- ✓ groomed and bathed
- ✓ played with and entertained
- ✓ trained – many behavioural issues stem from lack of time spent training your pet (in particular, dogs). Training is mental stimulation and helps prevent bad habits that often stem from boredom. Training good manners is important too.

Before adopting or buying a new pet, make sure that it is the right one for you and your family. Do some research beforehand about the specific needs of the animal. Ask yourself these questions before getting a pet:

- ✓ How long will this animal live?
- ✓ What are the ongoing costs?
- ✓ What does the pet eat?
- ✓ How much exercise does the pet need?
- ✓ How large will it become?
- ✓ How much will it cost for veterinary care?
- ✓ Do I have enough time to properly care for and clean up after the pet?
- ✓ What type of habitat does this pet need to be healthy?
- ✓ What type of exercise does this pet need?
- ✓ If you are a tenant, are pets allowed in the house, apartment, etc?
- ✓ Can I take my pet with me if I have to move to a new home?

- **Keep Your Pet Healthy**

No matter whether you have a dog, cat, horse, bird, small mammal (rodent, rabbit etc), bearded dragon, or other pets, providing regular life-long veterinary care is important for keeping your pet and family healthy. Regular veterinary visits are essential to good pet health. Talk to your pet's veterinarian about how to keep your pet healthy.

Provide your pet with a good diet, fresh water, clean bedding, and plenty of exercise. Keep up with your pet's vaccines, de-worming, and flea and tick control.

By keeping your pet healthy, you help to keep yourself and your family healthy. Contact your veterinarian if you have any questions about your pet's health or if you think your pet may be sick.

- **Teach Children How to Interact with Animals**

Pets can teach children compassion and responsibility. However, children should be supervised while interacting with animals to ensure the safety of the child and the pet. Teach children to wash their hands right after playing with animals or anything in the animals' environment (cages, beds, food or water dishes). Teach your children how to understand the animals body language when the animal is telling you/your child that they have had enough and need space, and to be left alone. Don't let children kiss pets or put their hands or other objects in their mouths after handling animals.

### **I. Does Having Pets Really Make Us Healthier?**

New studies find little support for a "Pet Effect" on physical or mental health.

A new study on the impact of pets on the physical and mental health of older adults supports his skepticism about the pet effect.

#### **☐ The Whitehall II Study**

The research was conducted by Gill Mien and Robert Grant of Kingston University in London, and appeared in the journal BMC Geriatrics. (Read it here.) They analyzed data on pet ownership and health that was collected



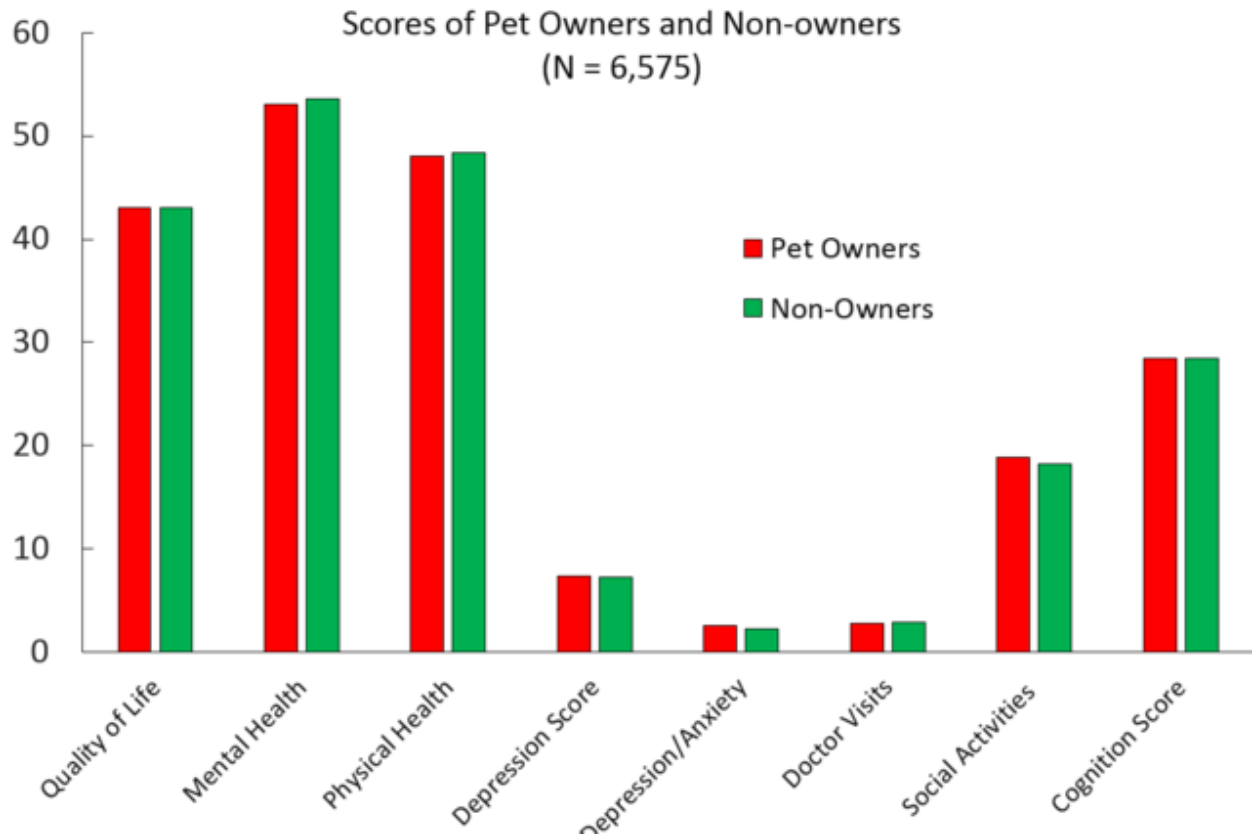
aspart of an ongoing research project called the Whitehall II Study. This is a long-term investigation of the impact of occupational and social factors on the mental and physical health of British civil servants. Every two years since 1984, participants have been surveyed about their health and well-being. Phase 9 of the study was collected between 2007 and 2009. In addition to questions about mental and physical health, the Phase 9 administration of the survey also included several items related to pet ownership.



The study included 6,575 participants between the ages of 59 and 79. About 2,000 of these individuals lived with a pet. Thirty-seven percent of the subjects had dogs and 62% had cats. Most of the items in Phase 9 were standardized measures of physical and mental health. There were also questions related to the participants' levels of exercise and aspects of the quality of their sleep. Finally, several questions concerned how the subjects felt about their neighborhoods, for example, friendliness, safety, and cleanliness.

## ☐ **The Results**

As shown in this graph, there were no meaningful differences between physical and mental health pet owners and non-owners, though pet owners were slightly worse off on a few measures.



Here are the results

- General health and number of chronic illnesses – No differences
- Quality of life – No differences
- General mental health – No differences
- Depression – Pet-owners were slightly worse off.
- Depression & Anxiety Inventory – Pet-owners were slightly worse off
- Cognitive status (Mini-Mental State Exam) – No differences
- Mobility – No differences
- Number of doctor visits – No differences
- Taking hypertension drugs – No differences
- Lung capacity – No differences
- Body mass index – Pet-owners were slightly heavier.

In short, the researchers concluded, “There were little or no differences in health variables, other than slightly worse mental health and higher BMI in owners.”



## **The Good News?**

The lack of impact of pets on the subjects' health and well-being was striking. Believers in the pet effect, however, can take some small comfort in a few of the results.

**Exercise:** As shown in this graph, dog owners engaged in considerably more mild and moderate exercise than non-pet owners. (There were no differences between the groups in their amounts of vigorous exercise.) But even this finding raises a troubling question about the pet effect. While the dog owners in the study were much more likely to get mild and moderate exercise, this increase in physical activity did not translate into any measurable impact on their health.

**Sleep.** Pet-owners in the Whitehall II study had less difficulty falling asleep than non-pet owners. But the pet-owners were also more likely to feel tired when they woke up. And although these differences were "statistically significant," they were so small as to be practically meaningless.

**Perceptions of Their Neighborhoods.** Pet owners, and particularly dog owners, felt more positive about their neighborhoods than non-pet owners. But, as in the case of quality of sleep, the differences between the pet owners and non-owners, while statistically significant, were so small as to have few, if any, real-world implications.

### **☒ The Inconvenient Truth about "The Pet Effect"**

The truth is that three decades of research on the pet effect have produced a muddle of mixed results. (See here for a short review of these studies.) Some investigators have reported that pet owners are better off. Others, however, have found that pet owners have more psychological and health problems than non-owners. These include being more likely to suffer from migraines, insomnia, panic attacks, ulcers, high blood pressure, loneliness, and depression. And still other studies have reported that living with pets had no effect at all on human health and wellbeing. As you might expect, industry press releases extolling the benefits of pet ownership never mention this growing body of scientific research.

## II. Science Says Your Pet Is Good For Your Mental Health



Being a pet in Western Australia is a plum gig. Pets are incredibly well loved: according to a 2015 Harris poll, 95% of owners think of their animal as a member of the family. About half buy them birthday presents. And it's a two-way street. People who have pets tend to have lower blood pressure, heart rate and heart-disease risk than those who don't. Those health boons may come from the extra exercise that playing and walking require, and the stress relief of having a steady best friend on hand.

The rise of animal therapy is backed by increasingly serious science showing that social support—a proven antidote to anxiety and loneliness—can come on four legs, not just two. Animals of many types can help calm stress, fear and anxiety in young children, the elderly and everyone in between.

More research is needed before scientists know exactly why it works and how much animal interaction is needed for the best results. But published studies show that paws have a place in medicine and in mental well-being. “The data is strong,” Beck says. “If you look at what animals do for people and how we interact with them, it's not surprising at all.” Here's a look some of the cutting-edge science in the field.

- **Rabbits**

In one study, a stressed-out group of adults were told to pet a rabbit, a turtle or their toy forms. The toys had no effect. But stroking a living creature, whether hard-shelled or furry, relieved anxiety. It worked for people regardless of whether they initially said they liked animals.

- **Cricket**

Animals don't have to be cuddly to help. In a 2016 study published in the journal *Gerontology*, elderly people who were given five crickets in a cage became less depressed after eight weeks than a control group. The act of caring for a living creature seems to make the difference.

- **Horses**

Among the most-studied therapy animals, horses have been involved in medical treatment plans in Europe since the 1860s. Activities like grooming a horse and leading one around a pen have been shown to reduce PTSD symptoms in children and adolescents.

- **Guinea pigs**

Animals make socializing easier for kids who find it stressful, says Maggie O'Haire of Purdue. In her study, when children with autism had a guinea pig in the classroom, they were more social with their peers, smiled and laughed more, and showed fewer signs of stress.

- **Fish**

Animals can focus people's attention. When people at an Alzheimer's-disease facility dined in front of aquariums with brightly colored fish, they ate more, got better nutrition and were less prone to pacing. They were also more attentive and less lethargic.

- **Dogs**

Some research suggests that when children who struggle with reading read aloud to a trained dog and handler, they show fewer anxiety symptoms. "Their

attitudes change and their skills improve,” says Lisa Freeman, director of the Tufts Institute for Human-Animal Interaction.

### **III. Ways Pets Improve Our Lives**

Check out these nine scientifically-researched ways that pets improve the lives of their human companions.



#### **1. They can help improve self-esteem**

Research published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology shows that pet owners exhibit stronger self-esteem than non-pet-owners. What's more, pet owners are more extroverted and less fearful than people who don't own pets.

#### **2. They can help reduce the risk of allergies**

Contrary to popular belief, it seems owning a pet does not make you more susceptible to allergies.

In fact, studies suggest that being exposed to a pet early in life may decrease your risk of animal allergies later on. In research conducted on young adults, those who had a pet in their home during infancy were approximately 50 percent less likely to develop an allergic reaction to animals.

#### **3. They can help reduce our negativity**



Much like thinking about a friend might help you feel less negative after a bad social experience, thinking about a pet has been suggested to have the same effect.

#### **4. They can help reduce loneliness**

In addition to boosting self-esteem, pets can also reduce the amount of loneliness we feel.

One study found that people with pet dogs reported having their social needs fulfilled just as effectively by their pets as by their friends. The research subjects reported that their dogs provided them with a strong sense of self-esteem, belonging and a meaningful existence.

Unlike the stereotype, however, people do not seem to rely on their pets more when their human interactions are lacking. That is, people don't turn solely to their pets in lieu of having friends but, rather, enjoy their pets' company in addition to the company of their friends.

#### **5. They make us feel supported**

Studies have also revealed that pet owners feel they receive just as much support from their pets as they do from their family members (see the Psychology Today article above). Much like the example above, people report feeling closer to their pets when they also feel close to important people in their lives.

#### **6. They help make us want to stay healthier**

It's really hard to sit on the couch all day and watch TV when your dog or cat is begging for attention. Maybe it's because of this that studies have shown that pet owners are healthier and more active than non-pet-owners.

Whether you're dragging a toy around your house for your cat or taking your dog on a casual walk, you're getting some exercise. Of course, dog owners, especially, are likely to do more walking, which is great for your health and mood.

#### **7. They can help make us less stressed**

Animal experts like Arden Moore say that simply petting your dog or cat can help reduce your stress.

Even more impressive, however, is this study, which suggests that pets can help reduce stress and comfort us even more than our friends and spouses. Their unconditional love and the fact that they don't judge us make pets the best support system during stressful times.

### **8. They draw other people to us**

Opposite to the myth of the "crazy cat lady" who lives alone with her 12 felines and zero friends, studies have found that owning a pet can actually improve our human relationships and draw others to us.

### **9. They can help stabilize our blood pressure**

Lastly and possibly most impressively, owning a pet can actually help reduce your blood pressure.

While medications like ACE inhibiting drugs can reduce high blood pressure, such medications aren't effective enough to control blood pressure spikes due to tension and stress.

However, this study took a bunch of stressed out stockbrokers and gave half of them dogs and cats, while leaving others without pets. Those given pets for the course of the study exhibited significantly more stable blood pressure than those without. What's more, when the control group learned of the study's findings, many of them got a loving pet to help them manage their stress.

Adopting an animal from your local ASPCA or other adoption center is the best thing you can do for him or her. When left on the street, animals are likely to die from starvation, vehicle accidents and disease. However, reputable animal shelters make sure to properly vaccinate and rehabilitate animals before they are put up for adoption, so you can be sure that the animal you're adopting will be a good fit for your family.

## **IV. A Pet Owner's Guide To Health And Wellness At Home**

Here are some things you can do to keep your fur baby healthy and happy.



- **GOOD NUTRITION**

Providing your pet with a nutritious diet is one of the most important things you can do to promote good health. A high-quality diet will provide the nutrients needed for growth, development, tissue repair, and maintenance of body systems. It will also help ensure that any excess or deficient nutrients are provided in an appropriate balance.

Make sure you're feeding them high-quality food from a reputable store or pet supply store—not just anything that's cheap! You want something that's nutritious for them and won't make them sick over time.

- **EXERCISE**

Exercise is an important part of a pet's health and wellness. It can help your pet maintain a healthy weight and strengthen muscles, bones, and joints. Exercise also gives your pet more energy, improves their mental well-being, and helps them sleep better at night.

You can take your dog for a walk or run, play fetch, or take him to the dog park to play with other dogs. Your cat may enjoy playing with interactive toys that

encourage movement such as laser pointers or balls on strings, and this all will help to keep your pet health and wellness.

- **DENTAL CARE**

By taking the time to brush your pet's teeth on a regular basis, you can reduce the risk of dental disease and improve their overall health. It is important to visit a vet every 6 months and learn more about dental care.

Brushing your pet's teeth is one of the most important things you can do for them, especially if they are prone to gum disease or tooth decay. Regular brushing removes plaque before it has a chance to harden into tartar and form dental calculus (tartar). Brushing also helps remove any food particles that may be stuck in their teeth.

- **GOOD GROOMING**

Grooming helps keep your pet clean and healthy, and it's also a great opportunity to bond with your furry friend.

Grooming your dog or cat can be as simple as brushing its coat or clipping its nails. Other tasks, such as bathing, trimming fur, and ear cleaning, may require more time and effort.

You can groom a dog or cat by yourself or with help from a friend or family member. If you are unsure about what to do, ask your veterinarian for assistance.

- **KEEP YOUR HOME CLEAN**

A clean home is a happy home for your pets. Regularly cleaning up after your cat or dog helps prevent illnesses and injuries from occurring in the first place. Make sure you're doing all these things:

Put away food bowls – Food and water bowls should be cleaned every day and food bowls put away when not in use so that they don't become breeding grounds for germs.

***Genius House Cleaning Hacks For Pet Owners***



Maintaining household hygiene and sanitation is challenging for pet owners. If you have a dog, cat or any other animal that sheds fur, creates paw prints and dirties your home differently, you must have a good house cleaning routine.



You can hire a weekly home cleaning service if you want your house cleaned as per professional standards. If you are a renter, keeping and leaving the rental property sanitary is necessary to regain your bond. You may have to hire budget vacate cleaning in Perth because it is necessary to meet the cleaning expectations of the landlord at the end of the tenancy.

Even when you can get professional help, you must know how to keep your abode clean and odour-free with pets.

Thus, here are 10 genius house cleaning hacks for pet owners that come in handy whenever you want to sanitise your home effectively and efficiently. Have a look:

- **Refresh Carpets With Baking Soda & Lavender Oil**

Carpets in homes with pets gather pet hair, dander and smells due to repeated contact with the animals. The smells and contaminants embed deep into the fibres of the carpets and spread to the entire house. It is unhygienic and can be embarrassing when you are expecting guests. Thus, regular cleaning of carpets and rugs is a must.

You must begin with the collection of the hair and debris to get rid of the contaminants and smells. Make sure that you are cleaning carpets with the help of a powerful vacuum cleaner that is made for such messes. Mix a cup of baking soda with lavender oil and sprinkle the mixture on the carpets. Wait 10-15 minutes, then vacuum the carpets thoroughly.

- **Remove Pet Stains On Hard Surfaces With Hydrogen Peroxide**

Washing hard surfaces with soap and water is insufficient to sanitise them after pet accidents. If you do not have a pet enzyme cleaner, use hydrogen peroxide to sanitise and disinfect pet stains.

Hydrogen peroxide is a great alternative to bleach, as it is non-toxic and effective. Mix the solution in equal proportions in a spray bottle and apply on pet stains to treat them. This hack also comes in handy while deep cleaning your house with pets without using harmful chemicals that can affect the environment and your health.

- **Wrap Duct Tape In Reverse On A Roller To Remove Pet Hair**

Do not have a lint or pet hair remover on hand? Take any paint or ordinary roller with a handle and wrap duct tape on it but in reverse. The idea is to make it a sticky roller that picks up pet hair and debris. This cleaning hack also works for regular house cleaning or sanitising upholstery during the end of lease cleaning in Perth. It will make cleaning the carpets easier by the removal of the loose contaminants.

- **Line Litter Boxes With Plastic Garbage Bags**

Rather than transferring the soiled litter into a bag and making a mess, line the litter box with a plastic garbage bag. When cleaning the litter, tie the garbage bag on top and dispose of the entire contents. It ensures that the box is clean and there is no foul smell or remnants that can lead to infestations and odour. It is necessary to do this to maintain hygiene and sanitation.

- **Get Area Rugs For Your Pet's Favourite Spots & Wash Them Weekly**

Carpets, furniture or bedding where your pet prefers to sit, sleep and eat can develop stubborn stains, indents and smells. Thus, to keep these spots sanitary, get area rugs to cover them. Wash these rugs every week to prevent them from getting heavily soiled. This trick allows you to keep your entire house smell nice and look beautiful as well.

- **Cover Drains With Hair Catchers While Bathing Your Pets**

Drains in bathrooms or the kitchen can get clogged and start smelling if pet hair go inside and accumulate. Since the hair clump in the drain gets trapped, it becomes a hotspot for bacteria and causes pet odours. Thus, cover the drains with hair catchers while grooming and bathing your pets.

- **Clean Upholstery With Rubbing Alcohol**

If your pet likes to snuggle on the couch or other upholstered furniture, sanitise it with the low moisture cleaning method. Fill a container with one-litre warm water, a cup of rubbing alcohol and a few drops of dishwashing liquid.

Dunk a microfibre cloth in the solution and wring it well only to dampen the cloth. Wipe upholstery with the cloth from top to bottom and repeat the process of dampening the cloth. It will remove all the stains and dirt from the furniture and the smell of pets that can turn off guests.

- **Use A Vacuum Cleaner To Groom Your Pet**

If you have a dog or cat breed that sheds a lot or the weather makes them shed, use a vacuum cleaner to groom them. Attach the upholstery cleaning tool and brush your pet with it. Since the vacuum will suck loose pet fur, your house cleaning time reduces significantly.

- **Install Plastic Sheets At The Bottoms Of Doors & Cabinetry**

Small dogs, rabbits, cats and many other pets can scratch the bottoms of doors and cabinetry and make the surfaces look ugly. They also dirty these areas with paw prints which take away from the appearance of the structures.

Thus, to prevent scratches and smudges, install plastic sheets at the bottoms of doors and cabinetry. It will insulate the surfaces from their teeth and nail marks and safeguard your expensive furniture.

- **Keep A Tray Under The Dog/Cat Bowls**

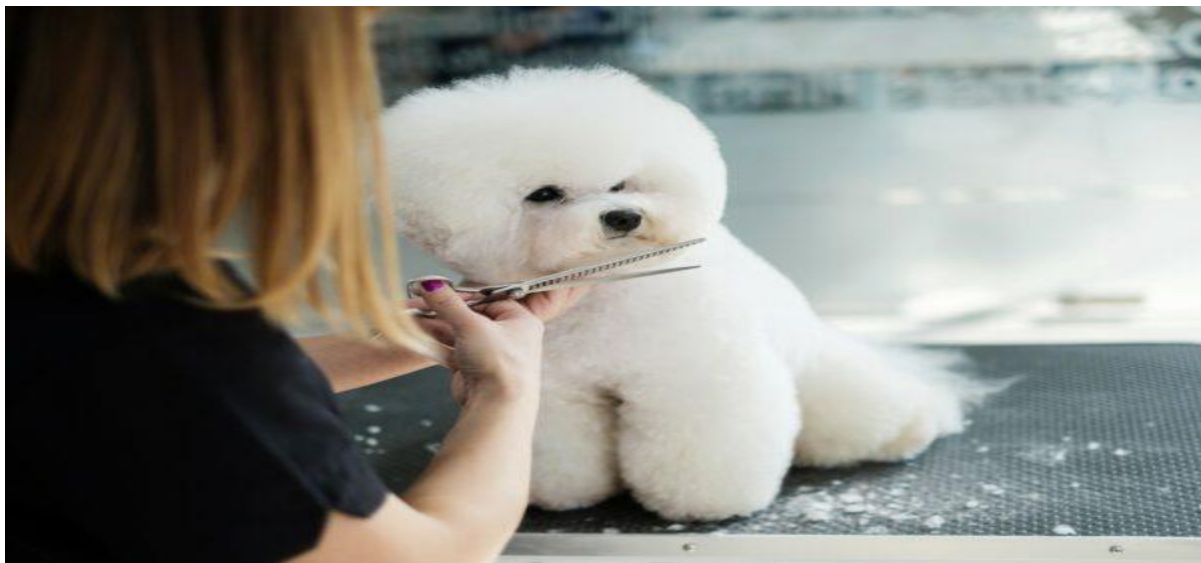
Most beloved pooches make a mess while eating their food from the bowl. You can either serve their meals in the yard or take this simple measure to prevent spills and slobbers all over the floor.

Get a wide, heavy-bottomed tray to keep the food bowl when your pet eats. Wash the tray after mealtime is over. This hack makes cleaning after mealtime a breeze.

Pets and messes go hand in hand, and you cannot prevent them. Therefore, you must learn quick cleaning hacks to prevent pet stains, hair and more in your home. You can hire professionals to deep clean your home. But for instant fixes, use the ten house cleaning hacks above.

## **V. The Pros and Cons of Getting a Pet**

The following pro and cons of having a pet will help you decide if you are ready to rise to the occasion.



**Pros:**



## **1. Increased Personal Safety**

One definite positive to having a pet unfortunately only applies to larger, free roaming pets. Mainly in the case of dogs, pets can bring a degree of safety to your life. A barking dog scares away most home invaders, and medium to large sized dogs provide security on late night walks. However, even smaller dogs, cats, and exotics have alerted their owners to approaching dangers like fire or gas leaks. When considering whether or not to get a pet, don't forget that your new family member could be a crucial element in keeping you safe.

## **2. Receiving Love**

No matter what kind of pet you get, you are sure to experience increased joy and love. Pets have a way of calming us down, and playing our heartstrings in a way that nothing else can. Pets can do a lot for helping you out of slumps and turning around a bad day.

## **3. Learning Patience**

Particularly when it comes to younger pet owners, having a pet can teach us valuable lessons. Training your pet can be a lesson in patience, while treating your pet well can help children learn how to be gentle and understanding.

## **4. Pets Empathize with You**

Another positive to getting a pet is having a family member who will always empathize with you. Regardless of what pet you get, most larger pets can sense when we are feeling under the weather or have had a bad day. Having something to cuddle with that genuinely cares that you feel better is a huge boost on those less than perfect days.

## **5. Improved Mental Health**

Having a pet is also a powerful way to keep yourself mentally functional. Across the board, pets of all types have proven to improve the health of patients with mental health challenges. From treating those with post traumatic stress disorder, to helping those who struggle with depression, pets are a helpful addition to combat a range of disorders. Not only do these

findings bring hope to those with health challenges, it also means that every day anxiety and stress can be greatly decreased by spending time with your pet.

## **Cons:**

### **1. Responsibility**

One drawback of getting a pet is an immediate increase in responsibility. Just like a young child, pets rely on you for absolutely everything. Not only that, if they have yet to be trained, they won't understand your anger if they do something wrong. If you are someone with an over scheduled life, or doubt your children's ability to step up to this responsibility, a small pet like a hamster or mouse might be a better first step.

### **2. Allergies**

Another drawback to pets in the home are allergies. Especially if you don't know what you're allergic to, bringing a cat or a dog into your life can bring unexpected hurdles. Keep in mind that allergies grow worse each time you are exposed to an allergen, so spending limited time with animals in the past is not conclusive proof you aren't allergic. If you're unsure of your animal allergies, pet sitting for a friend or spending time volunteering for an animal shelter might be something you want to try first.

### **3. Possible Safety Hazards**

Another important consideration when getting a pet is whether or not the animal in question brings more hazards to your life. A pet might be a fine addition for families with young kids, however a large breed of dog for example, will require extra attention and training to make sure it is safe around children. Similarly, aggressive types of snakes or territorial pets may not be the best addition if you have dependents living with you. It is important to consider the needs of everyone in your house before getting a pet.

### **4. Cost**

Unfortunately, another drawback to having pets is a necessary evil. Just like humans, animals need to be healthy and happy. Before you get a pet, consider the average yearly veterinary cost of owning the type of animal you are looking at. Cats and dogs for example, require several different shots throughout their first year of life, as well as preventative shots and treatment throughout their lives. Additionally, outdoor pets are more prone to infections, lacerations and pest infestations that require veterinary care. Even if your animal never has a major accident, every animal will require you to pay for basic veterinary care to have a healthy and fulfilled life.

## **5. Schedule Disorder**

Finally, remember that bringing a pet home means you will sometimes be at the mercy of their schedule. Cats for example, are naturally nocturnal, and are likely to find their way on top of you while you try to sleep. Similarly, dogs, birds, and many exotic animals will sometimes feel the need to make as much noise as possible in the middle of the night. Be prepared to take on these challenges when you decide it's time for a pet, and your transition into pet ownership will be much smoother.

## **The Final Words**

The above guide provides essential insights and practical tips for ensuring the well-being of our beloved pets. From nutrition and exercise to mental stimulation and preventive care, this comprehensive guide empowers pet owners to create a nurturing and safe environment, fostering a happy and healthy life for their furry companions.

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