

MYTHBUSTERS: FOUR THINGS YOU ONLY THOUGHT YOU KNEW ABOUT FLEAS AND TICKS

— <http://www.vetstreet.com>

Fleas and ticks have been around for centuries, serving as a source of discomfort and disease. While experts have learned a lot about these pests (including how to manage them in modern times) some common myths and misconceptions about fleas and ticks still exist in the minds of many pet owners, and they can make your parasite problem worse.

Myth: If you can't see 'em, they're gone

Over the past few decades, new generations of chemicals and drugs have become extremely effective at controlling fleas and ticks. Many vet-approved internally or topically administered products (as well as collars) that impair reproduction, inhibit maturation and/or repel and kill these parasites do work. They may work too well, because we've been lulled into a place where we think, "That'll get 'em!" And indeed it does get many of them. But we tend to forget about the fleas and ticks we can't see or reach, and that's one reason why we sometimes seem to be losing the flea-and-tick wars.

While adult fleas do "live" on the host, their immature stages exist in the environment. In fact, adult fleas living on your pet account for just five percent of the total population of fleas in your environment.

Fleas have four stages of development: egg, larva, pupa and adult. Adult fleas feed on pet blood, then mate and the females produce eggs. Larvae emerge from these eggs, eventually developing into pupae. When pupae mature to adult fleas, they jump on the pet and begin to feed and the cycle starts all over again. (If there is no host handy when fleas hatch, they can go for a good while without feeding. So even if pets and people aren't home for a few days, or longer, an infestation can quickly occur when they return.)

Ticks also have immature stages. After feeding and mating, adult female ticks drop from their host and lay hundreds to thousands of eggs. These eggs develop into tiny larvae, which molt into nymphs. Nymphs then molt into adult ticks.

Eradicating fleas and ticks at every stage isn't easy. Even in households where aggressive parasite control is practiced, fleas can re-establish their hold.

Myth: Fleas and ticks are a warm-weather problem

There is a common belief that fleas and ticks are exclusively a seasonal concern: they come out in the warmer weather and die off in the colder seasons. We look forward to those first frosts or snows that seem to send the little pests packing and give us a few months respite before the darn things ↗

(*"Mythbusters..." cont.*)

reappear. Unfortunately, even in cold weather, fleas can survive in many places, including underground in burrows, in sheds and outbuildings, under decks and around foundations—where the temperatures, food supply and overall conditions are sufficient to maintain a population of reproducing fleas. Ticks are also capable of surviving surprisingly cold temperatures.

The reality is these critters possess an incredible ability to survive and when conditions in the environment become more ideal the populations can explode. Cold weather may reduce but doesn't eliminate flea and tick infestations.

Myth: Indoor pets don't need protection

While there is no doubt that outdoor pets face much greater exposure, it is important to recognize that fleas can and do infest indoor-only animals. Where do these fleas come from? For starters, they hitchhike their way into homes on people's clothes, other indoor-outdoor pets in the family and unwanted pests like mice and rats. (Unfortunately, for many of us, these rodents do exist in, around and under our homes.) Outdoor animals that sleep around houses or find their way into crawl spaces and basements can potentially introduce fleas into your home.

While fleas and ticks certainly find it difficult to survive in extremely cold or hot and dry environments, remember that people don't live outdoors. We air condition, humidify and heat our homes so they are comfortable for us and are perfect microclimates for fleas. And these indoor fleas are just as hungry as the ones in the yard.

Myth: Fleas and ticks are only a problem for pets

Fleas and ticks can make both you and your pet miserable not to mention downright ill. Fleas can transmit bartonellosis (also called cat scratch disease) to people and can serve as an intermediate host for tapeworms. Ticks can also transmit a number of diseases, including Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. So flea and tick control isn't just important for your pet's health, it's important for yours.

What can you do?

There are some steps you can take to minimize the population of fleas and ticks:

- Be honest with yourself about the problem. You almost certainly have fleas and ticks living in the zone around your home. If you think there may be fleas in your home, or if you're concerned about fleas or ticks on your pet, talk to your veterinarian. He or she can recommend safe, effective products for your pets. In some cases, your vet may recommend a professional exterminator for your home.
- Practice year-round flea-and-tick-control by using a product recommended by your veterinarian on every pet.

(continued on next page)

(*"Mythbusters..."cont.*)

This means using the product in January as well as in June and treating all cats and dogs in your family, regardless of where they spend their days.

- Remove brush debris from around your home. These areas present opportunities for small flea- and tick-carrying animals to nest and provide a source of exposure for dogs and cats.
- Get rid of that old upholstered furniture on the porch or in the garage where your dog or cat loves to hang out. These are perfect flea nests and, unless you get rid of them, they'll contribute to ongoing infestations.
- Close off crawl spaces and screen over vents under the house and leading into attics that can serve as runways for small mammals that carry fleas and ticks in with them.

Controlling fleas and ticks is doable. By arming yourself with information, discussing appropriate products with your veterinarian and taking steps to control environmental and wild life factors, you can win the flea-and-tick fight. ☐

It's Tick Time!

(Video & Article on How To Remove Ticks)

Visit:

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Six Important Safety Reminders For Your Pets This 4th of July!

by <http://petpav.com/>

The 4th of July is a very scary day and/or night for our pets! And sometimes the festivities go on all week! Any pet owner knows how most dogs and cats are extremely afraid of the fireworks or any of the noises they hear outside. The 4th of July is also a time when a lot of pets try to escape either from your house or wherever you might bring them out of fear.

Below are six important safety reminders for during the festivities for the 4th of July holiday:

1. All pets should wear a physical identification tag. Make sure all pets, even indoor cats, are wearing a collar with a physical id tag that includes your name and telephone number. Even if your dog or cat has a microchip, your beloved could end up miles away or deep under a neighbor's porch. This easy precaution will save a lot of anguish, time, and energy if your cat or dog gets out of the house. Check out Pethub which has a variety of pet id's and even an on-line source to help find your pets if they get lost.
2. Keep your pets inside all day and night to be safe. During neighborhood firework displays, keep all cats and dogs safely inside. Dogs and cats who are scared of noises should be put into a bathroom or other room with a secure door no windows. A screen door will not keep a nervous dog inside. It is better not take a dog to watch a large commercial firework display as it only increases the chances of him or her becoming lost in an unfamiliar area.
3. Your pets are safer at home than an event where they can run away. It is safer to keep your pets at home during Fourth of July celebrations instead of bringing him to your neighbor's party. Keep your pets inside your home and not in your yard. Your pets will be a

lot happier indoors, and not tempted to leap over a fence to find you.

4. Provide your pets with a 'safe place' for when the fireworks go off! Dogs and cats can be startled by the loud noise of fireworks. Once the festivities begin, keep your dog or cat in a safe room where he can feel comfortable.

If your dog is crate trained put your dog in his crate covered with a blanket to make him feel secure. Make sure all your pets have a go-to spot where they can feel secure.

5. Try to block out the scary sights and sounds. Try to block the outside sights and sounds by lowering the blinds and turning on the television. Play soothing music in the background to counteract the noise of the fireworks. Put the air conditioning or fan on to help drown out the noise. There are also some natural calming solutions on the market that you can give to your pet (but no sedatives)! Petfection Calming Spray is an all-natural spray that helps calm your dog in stressful situations.

6. No sparklers anywhere near your pets! Make sure to keep all the sparklers, candles, insect coils and oil products out of reach. If inhaled, the oils could cause aspiration pneumonia in pets and you will need to take your pet to the vet immediately. And residue from fireworks that contain potentially toxic substances, including potassium nitrate, arsenic and other heavy metals can be extremely dangerous for your pets.

July 4th is one of the most stressful days for your pets. So, keep an eye on them and if you can, it really is safest to keep your pets at home where they are the most comfortable and less likely to run away. ☐

Do You Have A Herding Dog?

Part I

by David Kelly

Out of all the breeds you could have chosen you selected a Shetland Sheepdog, why not see if your dog can herd. Just about any dog can be trained to be an obedience dog, but not all dogs can be herding dogs. Unlike obedience which is a learned skill herding is an instinct gift that not all dogs have. Herding instinct tests are usually given at AKC stock competitions for a modest fee. There are many trainers who also offer instinct tests as well. The difference is with the AKC testing you can earn a certificate if your dog passes on two separate days. Where the private trainer will just tell you that your dog has what it takes to be a herding dog.



Ben (at one year old) herding a three-sheep herd in a small arena.

The instinct test is usually conducted by either a judge or trainer in a small ring with three or four sheep. The owner will walk their dog into the ring on a leash then release their dog on the command of the evaluator. The first task the dog is evaluated on is, will they go to the sheep and stay on the sheep. Usually a dog's first time in the ring if they have instinct they will continuously circle the sheep and if one sheep breaks from the herd the dog will chase that individual sheep. Once it is established that your dog will stay on the sheep the evaluator will attempt to get the dog to change its direction of travel from clockwise to counter clockwise. There are other behaviors that are also looked for such as excessive barking or attacking the sheep. Basically if your dog will run to the sheep and continue to circle the sheep you have a good chance of developing a herding dog.



Ben and Shiloh (at four months) waiting their turn in the arena.

Herding is sharply different from obedience. In herding your dog must be able to independently identify a problem and develop and implement a solution without assistance. In obedience a dog will keep one eye on their master and wait for their next command. This is why when training a herding dog you only teach the basic obedience commands sit, stay, down, stand, walk-up and come. There are other commands that you will teach your dog but these commands are for team work.

Getting started there are two individuals that need to be trained you and your dog. Don't get discouraged if your dog learns faster than you, you'll catch up. First you need to be aware of safety for you, your dog and the sheep. You will be working with livestock that moves fast and is heavy. You will need to have a firm footing and be extremely agile. Secondly the sheep or goats see themselves as lunch and your dog as a hungry wolf. If a sheep should break away and your dog takes chase after it you need to move quickly to that sheep. The sheep can't defend them- ➔

("Do You Have A Herding Dog?" cont.)

selves and to allow the dog to continue to chase them can cause the sheep undo stress. Your dog may even get frustrated and bit the sheep causing the sheep injury. The sheep is going to seek safety and will want to re-join the herd or get behind you. If a sheep panics it could run into you, attempt to jump a fence and break a leg so move quickly to tame the situation.

You may have watched a herding demonstration where the shepherd stands in one location and just uses a whistle to direct their dog this takes a lot of time to master. In the first stages of herding you want your dog to just get used to working around sheep. You also want to learn how to work around the sheep this includes staying at the head of your sheep, walking backwards and learning how the sheep react to different pressure. Your dog will also be learning how the sheep react as they get closer.

The sheep will want to follow you or race back to the barn. A novice dog will attempt to use objects in the ring to control the sheep. Your dog may keep the sheep on the fence and move them forward or put them in the corner and hold them in place. If this is happening give your dog some credit for thinking. Your dog is a tool that is going to drive and steer your herd. This is accomplished by having your dog stay at the rear of your sheep and making a half circle from 3 to 9 o'clock. This leave 9 to 3 O'clock open for the sheep. This is an over simplification. At first it may seem impossible for you to be at the head of your sheep and keep your dog moving from 3 to 9 o'clock without getting run over, but the two of you will learn quickly.



Ben (at four months) using the fence to hold his herd.

You will need a crook or a sorting rod to direct your dog. You're going to use the rod just like a railroad crossing gate. When you want your dog to change direction reach out with your rod with it in front of your dog and say "There go-bye or There away" then step towards your dog opening up a hole for your dog to maneuver through in the direction you want them to go. Then follow your dog with your sorting rod behind them. The rod coming from behind means go forward the rod in front means stop or change direction. If your dog takes the initiative and changes direction on their own praise the dog with "good go bye or good away" you're teaching your dog vocabulary. (Away means for the dog to go to their right, and go bye means to the dogs left) I have noticed many variations in terms for directing the dog, just pick one and stick to it.

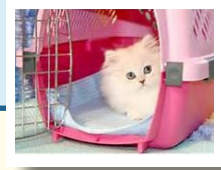


Ben changing direction. His master has extended a sorting rod to his right blocking Ben's path. Ben changes direction very quickly.

("Do You Have A Herding Dog?" cont.)

Soon you'll want your dog to increase their distance from the herd to get your dog to increase their distance use your crook or sorting rod. Extend your rod out pointing it towards your dog's shoulder and your dog will start to move away from the end of your rod. From this point working as a team will take time and practice.

Your first competition is for fun. Unless you have made some exceptional strides in training you'll want to enter either a HT or PT trial. There are Sheltie-only competitions or open breed competition both offer you the opportunity to learn how the competition is conducted and a fun weekend. Remember enter HT to have fun first and second to learn you're competing against yourself. □



How to Get Your Cat Into a Carrier and Not Get Scratched!

by <http://petpav.com/>

Let's face it! Most cats don't like going to their veterinarian. Can you blame them? After all, most of us aren't exactly thrilled to go to a doctor's appointment. And, most cats hate being in a carrier since it is associated with going somewhere unwanted and it is kind of claustrophobic. The real challenge, of course, is how to get your kitty into a carrier without getting scratched or having them jump out!

Below are some tips to help:

Make sure to get the right carrier

Get a carrier that is designed specifically for transporting pets and that works with your particular cat. Most carriers come in hard plastic or soft-sided versions and in all different sizes. Hard-sided carriers are best for just starting out. Get one that opens from both the top and the front. Soft-sided carriers are lighter-weight, smaller and easier to handle. These open from both the top and the side. Regardless of which carrier you choose, make sure you get one that can be easily taken apart. This is imperative for cats that won't come out on their own, or for cats that are sick or in pain.

Align your carrier

with a familiar scent

Cats are very smell oriented. Their sense of smell is around 14 times more sensitive than ours. You can use this to your advantage by making the carrier smell more familiar and less like that last trip to the vet. Clean out the carrier and then put a towel that your cat has slept on in the carrier to make it more familiar and comforting. Or, try spraying the cat pheromone Feliway® into the carrier 15 minutes before placing your cat inside which relaxes them.

Take the carrier out the night before

If you take the carrier out the night before and leave it in your living room, your cat will get used to it being out. Most cats will walk over, smell it and sometimes play with it. By having it out the night before, it doesn't become a big event.

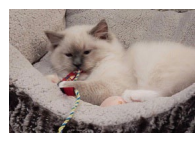
How to get your cat into the carrier

Some cat parents can simply open the carrier quickly and place your kitty inside. However, if your cat is a very skittish cat, the below method works wonders:

- Put your carrier in a bathroom and place the carrier so the door is open on its end.
- Then find a bath towel that is big enough to wrap around your cat and hold his legs, paws and body. But, you want to be able to have a towel that can fit in the carrier.
- Get the cat into the bathroom with you and the carrier. Depending on your cat, you may be able to pick him up and carry him in, or lure him in with food or a toy. Quickly close the door.
- Gently wrap your cat in the towel with only their head sticking out. You need to wrap and hold the towel securely enough so your kitty doesn't escape, but not so tight that you are hurting them or inhibiting their breathing.
- Then, put your cat's tail end in first so your kitty doesn't see what you are doing, lower your kitty into the carrier and quickly shut the door. The towel and the kitty will hopefully then be secure in the carrier!

With the right carrier, planning and timing, you will be able to succeed in getting your kitty into the carrier and off to the vet scratch-free! □





Five Cat Training Mistakes: Guilty of Any?

by Mikkel Becker

Instead of reacting to your cat’s behaviors, such as scratching furniture, ignore and/or redirect the unwanted behavior and reward his good behaviors.

Training a cat might sound impossible, but it’s not. Cats are smart, and with the right approach you can frequently channel their intelligence in productive ways.

Training a cat often seems harder than it really is, particularly if small missteps are hindering success. As a trainer, I see cat owners make the same training mistakes over and over. Let’s talk about how to avoid five common errors and get your cat’s training back on track.

Five Mistakes to Stop Making

1. Overestimating how much time training takes.

Many cat owners assume that training a feline takes a significant amount of time and effort. The reality is that cats learn best in short training sessions, typically one to five minutes, spread out through the day. There’s also no need to schedule specific blocks of time to train your cat; instead, make use of small windows of downtime (while you’re waiting for the coffee to brew, for example, or for the kids to brush their teeth) to work with your cat. Finally, training is typically most successful when it is incorporated into already existing everyday interactions like mealtime.

2. Ignoring the good behavior and rewarding the bad.

When your cat does what you want him to do (uses his scratching post, for example) you probably take it for granted. But as soon as he digs his claws into the sofa, you react, most likely by scolding him or shooing him away or interacting with him in some other way. This teaches your cat that scratching the sofa (not his scratching post) earns him your attention, so he keeps doing it. Help put a stop to unwanted behavior by flipping your response: reward what your cat does right and ignore or redirect him when he does something you’d rather not see. Give your cat praise and petting when he uses his scratching post; when he claws the sofa, redirect him and reward him once he’s scratching in the right place.

3. Attempting to eliminate instinctive behaviors.

Many behaviors humans find undesirable, like clawing, pouncing, jumping or climbing, are natural for a cat. Attempts to eliminate these behaviors can be highly stressful for your cat and they almost never succeed. A better approach is to redirect these behaviors to spaces in your home where they are acceptable. Cat shelving, perches and trees are useful for felines who like to explore high places, while a box or laundry basket can offer a secure place for your cat to relax. Encourage your cat to explore these alternatives by luring him with treats, catnip, toys and petting. Reward him for following his instincts only in the designated areas.

4. Expecting your cat to listen without training.

Your cat’s not ignoring you—he doesn’t instinctively know what you’re asking him to do or why it’s worth doing. Don’t assume that words like “off,” “down” and “stop” mean anything to your cat simply because you say them all the time. If you want your cat to get off the counter, you will need to use positive reinforcement, not punishment, to teach him what “off” means. You will also need to teach him an alternative behavior, like ↗

(“Five Cat Training Mistakes...” cont.)

going to his bed or cat tree, to replace the one you are asking him to stop doing. Be patient: with practice, he will learn that “off” means he should abandon the counter and go to his bed and that doing so will earn him a treat of some sort.

5. Setting unrealistic training goals.

Every cat learns at his own pace: one cat might learn how to get in and out of his crate after only a few tries while it might take another cat days just to get comfortable being in the room with the crate. Pushing your cat to learn too much or go too fast means skipping needed reinforcement, which can lead to frustration and confusion and can increase the likelihood that your cat and you will give up on training. Increase the difficulty of training at a pace that keeps your cat engaged, but be cautious...slowing your pace to baby steps creates more opportunities for your cat to succeed and helps to build his confidence. And keep in mind that all those little steps add up to big steps and potentially big changes in your cat’s behavior.

One last thought:

if all else fails, don’t be afraid to ask for help.

If your cat’s issues aren’t getting better with consistent training or the problems are especially concerning, like aggression or failure to use the litterbox consistently, seek help from your veterinarian, who may refer you to a veterinary behaviorist. Your vet can help identify any medical issues that may be to blame for changes in your cat’s behavior and habits, while a veterinary behaviorist or trainer can provide individualized training advice tailored to your cat’s issues. ☐



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- ▶ **Canine Ear Taping** HF Lady Snickers Canine Ear Taping
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- ▶ **Trimming Sheltie Ears** Learn How To Trim Sheltie Ears
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- ▶ **Trimming Sheltie Feet and Hocks** Trim Sheltie Feet and Hocks
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- ▶ **Is Your Dog a Territorial Barker?** This Training Can Help Stop This Barking
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- ▶ **Puppy Feeding Demo** Puppy Supplemental Feeding by Dianne Hawes
Visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7aibJut6SsU>

- ▶ **Lilly Blossom Drinking From A Miracle Sponge** Breeders sometimes are faced with a puppy who is not feeding properly because the mom has little milk or the siblings are pushing the weaker one away.
Visit: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zuows5_nges&feature=share

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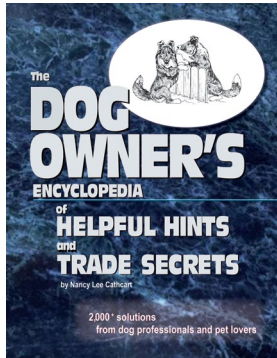
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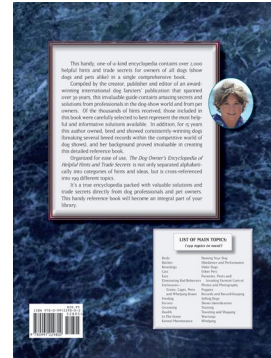
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