



These Are The 31 Healthiest Foods For Your Dog

Being good pet parents, we are always looking for ways to please our fur babies. As hard as many of us may try to keep our dogs on their canine diets, sometimes we just can't resist slipping them an occasional human morsel. A lot of people feel that dogs should not be given any "people" food, however, if you'd like to reward your pet with table scraps, you actually can safely, just make sure that you choose people foods that aren't harmful for canines.

Here are a few "dog-approved" people foods that are actually perfectly safe... and even healthy!

Coconut and Coconut Oil: Coconut is made up of a beneficial fatty acid chain called Lauric acid, and when dogs and humans synthesize Lauric acid it produces a compound called monoglyceride monolaurin. This substance helps fight and destroy viruses and various pathogenic bacteria, thus protecting your pets from infection and boosting their immune systems. Additionally, coconut contains albumin, which is a water-soluble protein found in many animal tissues and liquids.

Many diseases and ailments, like yeast infections, smelly coats, hot spots, cuts that have been infected, and even cracked paws, can all be cured with just a jar of "virgin coconut oil." When all forms of diet remedies have failed, then it is time to try out this miracle natural medicine for your dog. Virgin coconut oil means that it is unrefined, and it can be used for both dogs and humans. Coconut Oil can help reduce cancer risks. It also improves the digestion of your dog and becomes medicine for most digestive upsets.

Thyroid function is also kept normal with coconut oil. It can give your dog a smooth glossy coat, as well as healthy, supple skin. Yeast and fungal infections are also treated and prevented through the use of coconut oil. Arthritis and similar pains can also be minimized or treated. Coconut and coconut oil can also balance your dog's metabolism and keep weight under control. Coconut and its oil are also something that your dog will most likely love to eat, and gobble up. Mix it with their food it can cure many picky eaters.

Peanut Butter (*Conflicting Information PLEASE READ CAREFULLY*): This is a favorite treat of many canines, and has been for years. It is recommended by many professionals as a safe snack and is added to hundreds of dog treat ↗

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products. Not only is it a good source of protein, but it also contains heart healthy fats, vitamin B, niacin and vitamin E. But some information shows that it could be dangerous to dogs as well as humans. While I have not heard of any dogs having an issue with peanut butter, I will share what I have found.

It is said that most peanut butter contains Aflatoxins, that are naturally occurring mycotoxins produced by a fungus called *Aspergillus*. These are carcinogenic, cancer-causing substances shown to be toxic to the liver and are known to cause liver cancer in laboratory animals.

According to Dr. Andrew Weil:

A few years ago, Consumers Union looked into the question of aflatoxins in peanut butter and found that the amounts detectable varied from brand to brand. The lowest amounts were found in the big supermarket brands such as Peter Pan, Jif and Skippy. The highest levels were found in peanut butter ground fresh in health food stores. BUT, before you break out the Jif for you or your dog, you need to know that another issue with the cheaper brands is that they contain trans-fatty acids. These are one of the most toxic food substances today, due to the highly toxic process that makes foods more stable and sit on shelves for a long time. Hydrogenation is the process of taking a plant oil, adding a nickel catalyst, heating it and then removing the nickel catalyst. This results in a highly toxic fat that causes diabetes, heart disease and chronic inflammation. If the peanut butter you buy contains *trans fats, hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils in the ingredients don't buy it!*

And if trans fats aren't bad enough, roasting nuts can also cause the fats in peanuts to go **rancid**. So if you are going to buy peanut butter, at the very least, *make sure it's raw and doesn't contain hydrogenated fats*. But of course, you still may have to deal with the aflatoxins. One way to help avoid the effects of aflatoxins, is to buy Earth Balance Creamy Coconut and Peanut Spread, as the coconut oil in the peanut butter should kill the fungus that causes the aflatoxins.

Studies have found that coconut oil can kill viruses that cause influenza, herpes, measles, hepatitis C, SARS, AIDS, and other illnesses. It kills bacteria that cause ulcers, throat infections, urinary tract infections, gum disease and cavities, pneumonia, and gonorrhea and other diseases. It also kills fungi and yeasts that cause candidiasis, ringworm, athlete's foot, thrush, diaper rash, and other infections, and even kills tapeworms, lice, giardia, and other parasites.

Lean Meat: Think chicken, beef or pork with no visible fat and no added sauces or seasonings can be a great training treat or can add a bit of good-quality extra protein to your dog's diet. Lean meat is an excellent, balanced source of amino acids, the building blocks of muscle in your dog's body.

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Meat is also a great source of B vitamins (Thiamin, Riboflavin, Niacin, Pantothenic acid, Pyridoxine, and Cobalamin). These vitamins are involved in energy metabolism in the body. Meat also makes a good meal replacement if you're in a pinch and out of dog food.

Liver: Used in moderation, this meat is also a good choice and available freeze-dried in most pet stores. It makes a great training treat, that you can also buy fresh in the grocery store to feed at home. Fresh liver can be cooked and then baked to make your own liver treats. Liver is an excellent source of B vitamins, Vitamin A and Vitamin K. It is also a great source of iron. Too much liver may be toxic to dogs because of its high vitamin A content, so it is best to limit the amount of liver fed to your dog to not more than 1 gm (.035 oz.) of fresh liver/Kg (2.2 lbs.) body weight per day.

Editor's note: Always purchase calves' liver because it is the cleanest.

Salmon and Tuna: These are good sources of omega 3 fatty acids, which are responsible for keeping your dog's coat healthy and shiny, as well as supporting your dog's immune system. Feed your dog cooked salmon, add salmon oil to food, or slip them some of your unwanted fish skins. Tuna may be a classic cat snack. But despite stereotypes, dogs can eat tuna too, and it's healthy offering protein, vitamins on top of the omega-3 fatty acids.

Eggs: Scrambling up an egg for your pup is a great way to give their diet a protein boost. Eggs are also a source of easily digestible riboflavin and selenium, making them a healthy snack.

Cheese and Cottage Cheese: A great treat for a dog as long as they are not lactose intolerant, which a small percentage are. So if you're unsure, make sure to monitor your dog's reaction. Opt for low or reduced fat varieties and don't overfeed, as many cheeses can be high in fat. Cottage cheese is typically a good choice because it is high in protein and calcium and it's fairly bland, so it can be a good way to add some extra protein to your dog's diet.

Greek Yogurt and Kefir: High in calcium and protein, but make sure to only choose yogurts that do *not* contain artificial sweeteners or added sugars. Yogurts with active bacteria can act as a probiotic and are good for your dog's digestive system.

Oatmeal: This is a great source of soluble fiber, which can be especially beneficial for older dogs with bowel irregularity issues. It is also a great alternate grain for dogs allergic to wheat. Make sure to cook oatmeal before serving it to your dog.

Pasta: Dogs can eat pasta, which is really nothing more than flour, water and sometimes eggs. All of these ingredients are safe for dogs, so any variety of pasta should be fine but I lean toward whole grain pasta. Although it's probably best to hold the commercial pasta sauce, as these are usually acidic, and contain a lot of sugar and salt, which can upset your dog's tummy. Also, keep in mind that some dogs are allergic to wheat, so if that's the case, leave pasta off the menu.

Rice/Brown Rice: This is good to use when your dog has an upset tummy and needs a bland meal. There are a variety of different types of rice. Brown rice is a little higher in protein and fiber and a little lower in fat when compared to white rice. White or instant rice is an easily digestible carbohydrate which makes it a good source of energy which is especially good when feeding an older dog. ↗

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Sweet Potatoes: Are another source of dietary fiber and contain vitamin B6, vitamin C, beta carotene and manganese. Sweet potatoes are great sliced and dehydrated as a chewy treat for your dog. There are so many dog treats on the market that we often overlook the simple, healthy and reasonably priced treats available at our grocery store.

Popcorn: This is best when it is air popped with no butter or salt. It makes a great low calorie treat, contains potassium as well as the bone-building minerals phosphorous, magnesium and calcium. So snuggle up and share that popcorn with your furry friend next time you watch a movie.

Flax Seed (Milled Or Oil): This is a good source of omega-3 fatty acids that are good for skin and coat. Whole flax seeds are best if ground right before feeding as this type of fat can go rancid quickly. Flax seed can also be added to your dog's diet as a source of fiber. Flax oil is a more concentrated form of omega-3 fatty acids without the fiber.

Make sure that you store the oil or seeds in the fridge in an air tight dark container.

Baby Carrots: These are great for a dog's teeth, they are low calories and high in fiber and beta carotene/vitamin A.

Pumpkin, Squash and Zucchini: Good source of fiber as well as beta-carotene/vitamin A. It can help keep the GI tract moving and can aid with digestive issues.

Like pumpkin, squash can be added to bulk up his stool and is a good source of beta-carotene and vitamin A). Be sure to *remove the seeds*.

Zucchini like other squashes makes for a delicious and healthy snack, providing potassium, folate and vitamin content make it healthy for you and your dog, and no part of this vegetable is toxic to canines.

Green Beans: Make a great treat for your dog since they are filling and low in calories. Select beans that have no added salt.

Peas: These can be added right to your dog's food, frozen or thawed. Peas are a good source of the B vitamin Thiamin, phosphorous and potassium.

Broccoli: This vitamin-rich vegetable can be a great occasional nutrition boost for dogs. However, it shouldn't make up more than 10 percent of a dog's diet as it could cause gastrointestinal irritation.

Seaweed Nori: Dried edible seaweed (red algae species), is a Japanese staple often associated with sushi. It is available in some supermarkets, and certainly in those with Asian food items. It has protein, soluble fiber, Vitamins C, E and all the B vitamins, and minerals such as zinc and copper. It also contains some lesser-known sterols and chlorophyll, which have been investigated for their effects on regulating metabolism. Nori has some beneficial effects on fat metabolism, immune function and anti-tumor response. Nori does not have a strong odor or flavor, and the paper-thin sheets can be torn and soaked in broth, then added to food, or just added dry. My dog actually loves Annie Chun's Seaweed Snacks.

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Fruit Salad: There are lots of fruits that are sweet, delicious and healthy for dogs to eat. Strawberries, blueberries, apples, cantaloupe, watermelon and bananas are all great choices.

Apple Slices: Help to clean residue off a dog's teeth, which helps to freshen her breath. Apples are a good source of fiber as well as vitamin A and C. Make sure to *take out the seeds and the core* before feeding to your dog, as these can be choking hazards.

Cranberries: Fresh cranberries have many health benefits and provide vitamins A, B1, B2 and C and prevent urinary tract infections. Just be sure *not to give your dog too many cranberries* as they may make him gassy.

Pears: Dogs can eat pears safely, *but the cores (specifically the seeds) can be toxic to canines*. Therefore, you don't want to simply toss a whole pear to a dog and watch him go to town, because he may get sick. It's a better idea to cut a pear up and feed the pieces to your dog while throwing the core away.

Pineapple: Can be a special treat for your dog. In small amounts, pineapple is beneficial for your dog. The fruit is rich in fructose, fiber, vitamin and mineral content. Your dog can eat pineapple to boost its immune system and improve digestion. Bromelain, found in pineapple is an enzyme that helps decompose protein which is very important to a dog. By giving your dog pineapple you are increasing his ability to absorb this protein. In essence from the dogs increased ability to digest, he is able to absorb more essential elements from the food that he consumes.

Parsley: This herb has long been thought to improve "doggie breath," so next time you are baking treats for your dog, try adding a few tablespoons of chopped parsley for added flavor and color. Parsley can also be a good source of calcium, potassium, and beta-carotene.

Mint: Peppermint is strong but safe for dogs. Try using it as an ingredient if you bake your own homemade dog biscuits. It helps freshen your pal's bad breath, and since peppermint has long been used to help settle upset tummies, you can even use it to help the next time your dog is a bit "barfy."

Cinnamon: A sprinkle of cinnamon every now and then is just as good for your dog as it is for you. Cinnamon has been long used to cure nausea and gas, and has been used to boost energy, circulation, digestion and brain health. Don't overdo it, though! *Too much cinnamon can have an anti-clotting effect*.

Turmeric: This is one of the most promising cancer prevention foods and can be found in your spice rack. The active compound in turmeric is curcumin, which has been shown to prevent the growth or spread of cancer cells in many types of cancer. It does this by acting as an anti-inflammatory and antioxidant, and by encouraging cancer cell death.

Although there are no studies in dogs that prove a clear cancer preventive function, there are many studies done in other species and with cells that clearly demonstrate curcumin's efficacy against cancer cells. For example, a dose of 80 mg/kg body weight was effective in preventing induced cancer in guinea pigs. While this may not be directly relatable to dogs, it does show that only a small amount should be required.

Next time you make a batch of dog treats, add a couple of teaspoons of turmeric to the recipe. You'll add a new flavour for your dog to try and will boost her intake of antioxidants.

Spirulina: This is a type of algae that is high in protein, vitamins, minerals, and essential fatty acids, it makes an ideal addition to a healthy ↗

("These Are The 31 Healthiest Foods..." cont.)

diet. However, spirulina also has some added health benefits above and beyond basic nutrition.

In many experiments based both on animals and humans, it was found that spirulina supported heart health by lowering the amount of fat in the blood, as well as lowering inflammation.

The maximum dose should be 1 to 2 tablespoons for a 45 lb (20 kg) dog. As with all supplements and new foods, introduce it to your dog slowly over time.

Carob: Almost every dog owner knows that chocolate is poisonous to their pets, but there's no reason why your pooch can't enjoy carob. Not only does carob not contain caffeine or the theobromine that makes chocolate so deadly for dogs, but it actually has many healthy properties. Carob contains plenty of vitamins and minerals, plus fiber and pectin, too.

Remember to try them in small amounts. If your dog experiences any sort of reaction, consult a veterinarian. Before giving your dog any people food, do your research to make sure it's safe.

Foods That Are TOXIC

Never feed your dog toxic human items such as: chocolate, onions, grapes, raisins, yeast dough, artificial sweeteners, macadamia nuts, avocados, alcohol or coffee. Consult your veterinarian with any questions on what is safe and what is harmful.

Chocolate: You've likely heard that you're never supposed to feed a dog chocolate, and there's a reason for that. That delicious candy contains caffeine-like stimulants known as methylxanthines. Chocolate also contains theobromine, a naturally occurring stimulant found in the cocoa bean, theobromine increases urination and affects the central nervous system as well as heart muscle. While amounts vary by type of chocolate, it's the theobromine that is *poisonous to dogs*. If ingested in large amounts, chocolate can cause vomiting, diarrhea, irregular heartbeat, seizures and even death.

White chocolate has the least amount of theobromine, with 1 mg per ounce. Far on the other side of the spectrum is baking chocolate, which has a huge 450 mg of theobromine per ounce! Knowing which chocolate is the most toxic is important, but may have you wondering how much does it take to poison a dog.

The list below should be helpful —

• **White Chocolate:** 200 ounces per pound of body weight. It takes 250 pounds of white chocolate to cause signs of *poisoning* in a 20-pound dog, 125 pounds for a 10-pound dog.

• **Milk Chocolate:** 1 ounce per pound of body weight. Approximately one pound of milk chocolate is *poisonous* to a 20-pound dog; one-half pound for a 10-pound dog. The average chocolate bar contains 2 to 3 ounces of milk chocolate. It would take 2-3 candy bars to *poison* a 10 pound dog. Semi-sweet chocolate has a similar toxic level.

• **Sweet Cocoa:** 0.3 ounces per pound of body weight. One-third of a pound of sweet cocoa is toxic to a 20-pound dog; 1/6

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pound for a 10-pound dog.

• **Baking (Dark) Chocolate:** 0.1 ounce per in a 20 pound dog.

Grapes and Raisins: While this fruit is nutritious for you, it’s *toxic to dogs and can cause kidney failure*. The type of grape or raisin doesn’t seem to matter, and the amount consumed may be a single serving of raisins or a pound or more of grapes. (Raisins are much more concentrated.)

Researchers are exploring the possibilities: a mycotoxin (fungal toxin), pesticide, herbicide or heavy metals, but thus far the actual toxin is unknown at this time.

Some clinical signs are vomiting and jittery (hyperactive) behavior are seen immediately to within the first 24 hours after ingestion. Diarrhea may also be seen, and the vomitus and feces may contain partially digested grapes or raisins. After 24 hours, the dog may become anorexic, lethargic and depressed. Additionally the abdomen may be painful, the dog may stop drinking and urinating. Ultimately, the kidneys fail, and without aggressive treatment, many dogs will die.

Onions and Garlic: Garlic and onions of all forms (powdered, raw, cooked, or dehydrated) can *destroy a dog’s red blood cells*, leading to anemia. That can happen even with the onion powder found in some baby food.

My dog has been given chicken and steak scraps that were seasoned with garlic and onion powder, making him sick for a full day. I recognized what was wrong and fed him Annie Chun’s Seaweed Snacks. He loves them and they stopped his symptoms.

The symptoms of anemia include weakness, vomiting, little interest in food, dullness, and breathlessness.

- Cooked liver: 4 ounces for a large dog; 2 ounces for a smaller dog.
- Good dog food full of iron.
- Lean meats like ground beef and lamb.
- Fish, nuts and vegetables.
- Foods with Vitamin B9, like carrots, egg yolks, pumpkin.
- Green vegetables like beans and leafy produce full of chlorophyll like dried Seaweed.

Avocado: Avocado leaves, fruit, seeds and bark contain a toxin called persin that can cause *upset stomach and breathing difficulties*.

Alcohol: Even drinking a small amount of alcohol can result in significant intoxication for a dog, which can lead to *vomiting, seizures and even death*.

Coffee, Tea, and Other Caffeine: Caffeine in large enough quantities can be *fatal for a dog*, and it is said there is no antidote. Symptoms of caffeine poisoning include restlessness, rapid breathing, heart palpitations, muscle tremors, fits and bleeding.

In addition to tea and coffee (including beans and grounds) caffeine can be found in cocoa, chocolate, colas and stimulant drinks such as Red Bull.

It’s also in some cold medicines and pain killers.

Macadamia Nuts: Dogs should not eat macadamia nuts or foods containing macadamia nuts because they can be *fatal*. As few as six raw or roasted macadamia nuts can make a dog ill. Symptoms of poisoning include muscle tremors, weakness or paralysis of the hindquarters, vomiting, elevated body temperature and rapid heart rate. Eating chocolate with the nuts will make symptoms worse, possibly leading to *death*.

Candy and Gum: Candy, gum, toothpaste, baked goods and some diet foods are sweetened with xylitol. Xylitol can cause an increase ↗

(“These Are The 31 Healthiest Foods...” cont.)

in the insulin circulating through your dog’s body. This can cause your dog’s blood sugar to drop and can also cause *liver failure* that can occur within just a few days. Initial symptoms include vomiting, lethargy, and loss of coordination. Eventually, the dog may have seizures.

Salt: Eating too much salt can cause excessive thirst and urination and lead to *sodium ion poisoning*. Symptoms of too much salt include vomiting, diarrhea, depression, tremors, elevated body temperature and seizures. It may even cause *death*. ☐

Heads Up!

Saturday night I returned home late and my dog didn’t recognize me. Being a nanny I thought I woke him up and he was having a night terror.

On Sunday he was still acting weird. I realized I had been running my new diffuser and decided to turn it off. Sunday afternoon he was feeling better.

Today, at work, my dog sitter said he wouldn’t come out from beneath the bed (which was very odd behavior for this happy guy). I came home from work early and again he was very confused about who I was...so I took him to the emergency vet clinic.

Turns out, the tea tree oil I was using in the diffuser is **toxic to dogs**. I hadn’t even put any on this body.

Thankfully, the tests showed that his liver is okay, but we aren’t out of the woods yet. It is a full 72 hours after exposure. He was given fluids under his skin to try to clear out the toxins.

Both the vet and poison control stated that they are seeing more and more of these cases as the popularity of essential oils is growing.

Please be sure the essential oils you are using in your home are not toxic for dogs or cats.

More information — <https://allnaturalpetcare.com/blog/2018/02/27/common-diffuser-essential-oils-may-toxic-dogs-cats-birds-pets/> ☐



DOG-FRIENDLY OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS

Always ask a veterinarian before giving any medication to your dog. Even "safe" human meds can be toxic to certain breeds or pets with preexisting conditions.



BENDADRYL
FOR ALLERGIES AND ITCHING
1 milligram per pound of dog



BUFFERED ASPIRIN
TO RELIEVE PAIN AND INFLAMMATION

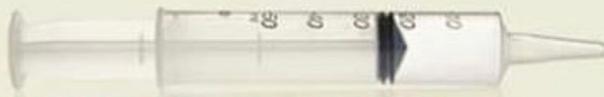
- 1/2 baby aspirin for dogs under 10 pounds
- 1 baby aspirin for dogs 10–30 pounds
- 1/2 regular aspirin for dogs 30–50 pounds
- 1 regular aspirin for dogs 50–100 pounds
- 2 regular aspirins for dogs over 100 pounds

DRAMAMINE FOR MOTION SICKNESS
12.5 milligrams for small dogs
25 milligrams for medium dogs
50 milligrams for large dogs



PEPTO BISMOL

FOR DIARRHEA, VOMITING AND GAS
1 teaspoon per 20 pounds of dog's weight
(toxic to cats!)



HYDROGEN PEROXIDE
USED TO INDUCE VOMITING AFTER ACCIDENTAL
INGESTION OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES
10 milliliters by mouth

GAS-X



TO MINIMIZE FLATULENCE
OR GAS DISCOMFORT
1/4 adult dose for small dogs
1/2 adult dose for medium dogs
1 adult dose for large dogs



HYDROCORTISONE
FOR ITCHING OR IRRITATED SKIN
Small amount applied topically up to
twice daily



IMODIUM A-D
FOR DIARRHEA
1 milligram per pound of dog

**PEPCID AC (FAMOTIDINE)
/ ZANTAC (RANITIDINE)**



TO REDUCE STOMACH ACIDS CAUSED BY
ULCERS, ACID REFLUX OR BELLYPACHE
1/4 tablet for dogs under 20 pounds
1/2 tablet for dogs 20–60 pounds
1 tablet for dogs over 60 pounds

ROBITUSSIN DM
FOR COUGHING OR HACKING
1 teaspoon per 10 pounds of
dog's weight





Improve Your Pet's Manners with These Helpful Tips

by canna-pet

There's no worse public humiliation than your dog dragging you down the street in pursuit of another animal or jumping up on the dinner table trying to snatch some food. With these helpful tips you and your furry friend will be able to take on the world as a classy, and much less embarrassing, duo.

Start Training Young

Take yourself back to the first day you brought your pet home. While it's one of the most exciting times, it's likely things didn't go as smoothly as you would have hoped. Were there accidents on the carpet? Chewed up furniture? Pantries broken into? All of the above? More than likely as a pet owner you've experienced at least one of these (and, you are not alone.)

Owning a pet is both a learning process and a lot of work. Most people don't consider this when they lock eyes and fall in love. However, if you start training your pup early on, there will be much less work in the future for the both of you. A great way to do so is to enroll your pup in training classes once it is safe for them to interact with other animals.

Choosing to participate in group training classes helps your pup become comfortable around other dogs and mimic the positive behavior that they see being rewarded. In addition, it teaches you as an owner how to properly train, reward, and correct your dog's manners. Though some older dogs may have behavioral problems due to lack of structure in their puppy days, senior dogs are still loveable and trainable companions.

Be Firm

There's nothing more heartbreaking than the way your dog looks at you after they know they messed up. And while it is easy to get fooled by those puppy dog eyes, it's important that you don't give in when your dog misbehaves.

Dogs are highly intelligent creatures and are able recognize fluctuations in pitch. Therefore, you must use an assertive tone and repeat similar phrases, such as 'no' or 'bad dog.' It is important to speak to your dog in a similar fashion each time so they consistently recognize when you are disappointed in their behavior.

Reward the Good

On the flip side, be sure to reward your pup and use higher and more positive diction when they behave well. Just as dogs can interpret assertive tones, they can also understand when you are satisfied with their behavior. You can do this by petting, raising your pitch, or giving your pet treats.

Designate a Place for Your Pet to Go

Another way to improve your dog's manners is to train them to have a place to go when they are anxious or being disruptive. Whether it is their dog bed, a particular room or a place outside, giving your pet his own space will not only calm your pet, but also keep them out of the way of the chaos.

If you train your pet to go to this place at an early age, they are more likely to listen and remember this space in the future. Try to keep ↗

("Improve Your Pet's Manners..." cont.)

the place consistent if you can, otherwise you'll have to start the training process all over again.

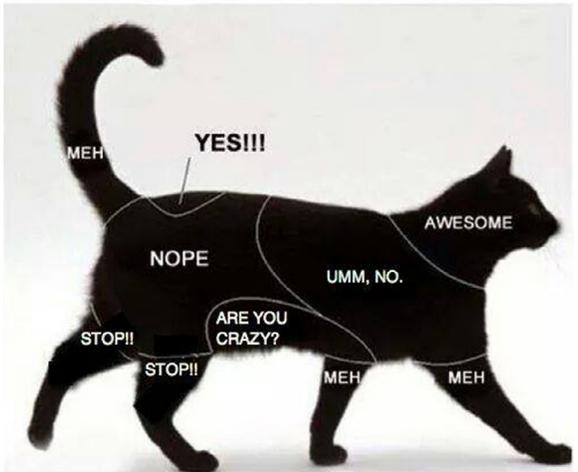
Teach Your Dog that it's Okay to be Alone

Oftentimes when you leave your pet alone, they simply don't know what to do with themselves, which might result in mischievous behavior. This is why it's important to teach your dog that it's okay to be alone in order to reduce their anxiety when you're away.

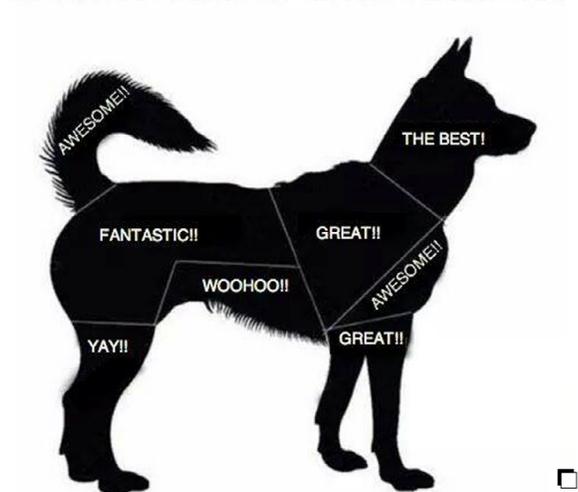
You can do practice this by leaving your pet alone in a room for a short period of time and then rewarding them when they behave well. If you practice this enough your pet will be comfortable when they are left alone, even for an extended period of time. As a result, less of your shoes will be destroyed and your couch cushions are more likely stay intact.

At the end of the day, your pet is going to be your partner in crime no matter how well they behave. Make sure your pet is well rested, be patient, and understand that while your pet might not have perfect manners in the beginning, part of training is rewarding their progress. □

PETTING CHART FOR YOUR CAT



PETTING CHART FOR YOUR DOG





Why Doesn't My Dog Get Frozen Paws? by Dr. Mary Fuller

New research shows that the circulatory system in dogs' paws may be uniquely adapted to help them tolerate cold better than people.

Once it snows, my dog Iris, a Shiba Inu, simply refuses to come inside. No amount of wheedling, bribery or waving of perfect squeaky toys can distract her from the giant snow globe inside my fence. She'll even tolerate the humiliating jingle-bell collar if it means more time dashing through the snow. What she won't concede to, though, is wearing booties.

It's easy to see how thick, furry coats help keep dogs warm. But their paw pads don't offer much in the way of insulation. How can dogs essentially go “barefoot” in the ice and snow when humans require heavy wool socks and insulated boots?

Think about it. If people walked in the snow barefoot, the blood vessels would constrict, redirecting blood away from the skin to help conserve core body heat. With less warm, oxygenated blood going to the skin's surface, the foot tissue could become white, numb and eventually freeze. But that doesn't seem to be the case in dogs. Research now shows the circulatory system in dogs' paws may be uniquely adapted to help them tolerate cold better than people.

The Advantages of a Dog's Cold Feet

In the 1970s, researchers wondered how foxes and wolves could hunt on their feet for extended periods, despite bitter temperatures. They found that even when immersed in a minus 31 degrees Fahrenheit bath (yikes!), foot temperature remained about 30.2 F. That's just warm enough to prevent tissue from freezing, but cool enough to help limit the amount of body heat lost through the paws. Researchers suggested that an infusion of blood to the paws helped keep them from getting too cold.

How the Core Stays Warm

Recently, researchers at Azabu University in Japan set out to see if modern-day dogs share similar paw features with their arctic counterparts, given that many domesticated canines can be traced back to wolves. Using electron microscopes, scientists discovered that the blood vessels in dog paws (in this case, Beagles) are organized to create what's called a “countercurrent heat exchange system.” It's the same sort of arrangement found in penguin feet, whale fins and seal flippers that helps these poorly insulated body parts withstand exposure to the cold while conserving body heat.

In simple terms, the veins in these locations run parallel to the arteries. As the arteries carry warm blood from the heart to the paw, heat is transferred to the neighboring veins. Since the arterial blood is cooler when it reaches the paws, less heat can be lost through the paws to the environment.

In the same way, cool blood entering the veins in the paw is warmed as it returns to the heart to help conserve heat and keep the core body temperature up. In other words, dogs may have cold paws, but, as we all know, they also have warm hearts. ↗

(“Why Doesn't My Dog Get Frozen Paws?” cont.)

This unique circulatory design is *not* found in cat paws, which led researchers to assume that cat feet may be more vulnerable to cold temperatures. And, of course, even the heartiest of winter-loving dog breeds shouldn't be left outdoors for long periods of time in freezing weather, because *all dogs can be vulnerable to hypothermia and frostbite.*

Should I Still Get Foot Protection for My Dog in the Winter?

The recent research from Japan helps explain how dogs are able to walk around barefoot in winter, but it doesn't mean every dog is suited to have his paws on the ice for long periods of time, which is why it is important to be careful. Winter footwear serves several purposes, ranging from providing additional foot insulation to preventing ice balls from collecting on the fur between foot pads and protecting against potentially toxic deicers on sidewalks. Even dogs in the grueling Iditarod race across Alaska wear booties to prevent abrasions caused by ice and snow.

So winter booties for dogs are still a good idea. That is, of course, if you can get your dog to wear them. ☐



Fireplace Safety: Help Keep Pets Safe This Winter With These Simple Tips

by Dr. Marty Becker, D.V.M.

Never leave your cat or dog alone by a fire, even if it has a mesh covering or glass doors.

As the Indian summer drifts away and cold weather marches in, we begin to anticipate long, cozy evenings in front of the hearth. Snuggling with our furry friends in front of a roaring wood or gas fire is one of winter's greatest pleasures, but fireplaces and open flames can be hazardous to pets.

Before you light that first fire of the season, take into account the safety of your dogs and cats. That goes double for puppies and kittens, who don't know the dangers of fire, and older pets, who may want to get close to the fireplace to warm their achy bones. When sparks fly or pets accidentally come in contact with flames, the result can be painful burns or even death. Tails, paws, long ears and long fur are especially at risk. The following tips will help you “fireproof” your pets.

Snuggle Up — Safely

Supervision tops the list when it comes to fireplace safety precautions. Never leave pets alone around fire. If a fireplace or wood stove is burning and you leave the room, take

(continued on next page)

("Fireplace Safety..." cont.)

them with you. Even if your fireplace has a mesh covering or glass doors, pets can still get burns from coming into contact with those hot surfaces.

Create a pet-safe environment near the fireplace or stove. If your pet has a bed near the fireplace, set it a safe distance away, where snapping embers can't travel. Use a baby or pet gate to prevent pets from approaching the fire. If you want something more stylish, you can find attractive fireplace hearth screens that serve the same purpose. Choose one that pets can't climb and that has a door that closes automatically.

It's also a good idea to keep fireplace tools behind the barrier, so they can't get knocked over by rambunctious animals. That includes pokers, matches and lighters, starter chips, kindling and newspapers.

You know what they say about playing with fire, but playing near fire can be hazardous to your pets, too. Put the kibosh on roughhousing and ball chasing around fireplaces or wood stoves. It's all too easy for pets to unknowingly run toward the flames and be unable to stop in time. Limit the tossing of treats and toys to areas away from the fireplace.

If you have cats, think twice about draping the mantel with greenery during the holidays. It may be pretty, but it can also be incredibly tempting for your cat to play with. So save it for your dining table or the front door.

Finally, for your own and your pets' safety, make sure the damper is open while a fire is lit. If it is accidentally left closed, all of you run the risk of deadly carbon monoxide poisoning. Installing a carbon monoxide detector is a good idea.

Now you're ready to safely snuggle with your pet as you both enjoy the warmth of the flames. □



Preparing for Holiday Travel — Pet Etiquette for Hotel Stays Travel

With the holiday season fast approaching, many families are planning their travels and bringing along Fido and Fluffy to stay with them at pet friendly hotels (tripswithpets.com).

Be sure to plan ahead and take all the necessary precautions to ensure that your pets' travels during the holidays is a happy and safe one.

For many, holiday travel means staying at a pet friendly hotel. It's important to make sure that you and your pet are prepared. Following some simple tips will help to ensure that your hotel stay with your pet is an enjoyable one.

1. It's recommended to book a room on the ground floor and by an exit. This will make it much easier for you to take your pet out for bathroom breaks.

2. Make sure to always clean up after your pet as well.

3. Be sure to exercise your pet...this means walks. Ask hotel personnel about the best places to walk your pet.

4. Treat the hotel room with respect...this means covering any furniture and beds that your pet may be allowed on.

5. If traveling with a cat, place their litter boxes in the bathroom. This will make clean-up much easier.

6. It's recommended to not leave your pet unattended in your hotel room. Even the best behaved pets can bark and become destructive when in new surroundings. If you must leave your pet alone, be sure that it's for a very short time. Alert the front desk that your pet is alone in the room and try putting on the TV or a radio to make your pet more comfortable. If you pet travels with a crate or kennel [<https://www.tripswithpets.com/catalog/travel-crates-kennels>], place them in it when leaving the room. In addition, place a note on the hotel door indicating that your pet is in the room.

7. Don't leave any pests behind. Before leaving home be sure to give your pet a good cleaning and de-flea and de-tick them. This means a good flea and tick bath along with utilizing preventative flea and tick control. Leaving behind a stinky smell, or worse, fleas or ticks is the kind of thing that makes accommodations change their pet friendly policy. In addition, if a deposit is required, these types of things could very well prevent you from getting it back.

8. Accidents happen! Even pets that have never had an "accident" indoors may do so under stress. Bring along a disinfectant as well as a rag in the event that you have to clean up after your pet. Not doing so could also cause a loss of deposit.

9. To ensure that you're welcomed back, keep your pet on a leash and avoid taking them into dining areas.

Following some common sense rules will help ensure that your pet has a happy and safe trip.

— TripsWithPets.com □





21 Foods That You Should NOT Be Feeding Your Cat

by Kristen Chapple

When I’m sitting at the dining table with my cat staring up at me longingly with her big eyes, touching a paw to my leg to get my attention, the urge to feed her a little something off my plate can be hard to resist. But it is important that we do indeed resist.

Not only is human food high in calories and, therefore, can quickly lead to an overweight kitty, there are also many foods that we take for granted in our diet that are extremely dangerous to cats, even toxic or lethal.

In general, cats are better off eating their own specially formulated foods which shouldn’t contain any nasties that are bad for them and are balanced to include all the nutrition that they need, as their dietary needs are quite different from human dietary needs.

While your cat may enjoy treats, what they need is for you to take care of their health. So know what they should and should not be eating with our list of 21 goods that you should not be feeding your cat, and why.

List of Foods That You Should Not Be Feeding Your Cat

TOXIC

Caffeine, Chocolate, Xylitol, Alcohol, Yeast Dough, Human Medicine, Green Tomatoes, Potatoes, Nuts, Dog Food

AVOID

Fat Trimmings, Bones (Uncooked), Raw Eggs, Onion, Garlic, Chives, Mushrooms, Grapes and Raisins

MODERATION

Liver, Tuna, Raw Fish, Treats

OKAY

Raw Meat, Milk and Cheese

1. Liver — In Moderation

Liver is actually very good for your cat, containing many of the vitamins and amino acids that they need to thrive. Also, liver is part of a cat’s natural diet in the wild, where they will catch and eat the whole animal, including muscle, liver, bone, skin and all. But that is the key, in the wild, liver would form only a moderate portion of their diet. A diet that is too high in liver, as opposed to muscle meat, can be toxic, specifically causing vitamin A toxicity. Symptoms include deformed bones, bone growth on the elbows and spine and osteoporosis. So, while it is good to include liver in your cat’s diet, don’t be tempted to pick up a bag of chicken livers at the local butcher for their bowl.

2. Tuna — In Moderation

Cats love the taste and smell of tuna, and it is perfectly fine to feed them tuna once in a while. However, it should not be a staple in their daily diet. Tuna is high in mercury, so eating a lot of it presents a cat with a high risk of mercury poisoning. Feeding cats human grade tuna as an alternative isn’t great either. The canned variety generally contains too much sodium for cats. The type in oil has too much fat. The freshly cooked stuff doesn’t have all the vitamins and minerals that they 7

(“21 Foods That You Should NOT Be Feeding Your Cat” cont.)

need, so if eaten regularly it can lead to malnutrition. Basically, cats should be eating tuna only in moderation (as should their humans).

3. Fat Trimmings — Avoid

While you would think that scraps of uneaten meat off your dinner plate would be relatively safe for cats, as consummate carnivores, unfortunately, they are not. Usually, your leftovers include fat that you have trimmed off the meat and bone and decided not to eat. While fat is not inherently bad for cats, the kind of concentrated fat that they would get from this kind of ‘treat’ can cause serious intestinal upset, which you will know about thanks to the accompanying vomiting and diarrhea.

4. Bones (Cooked) — Avoid

Another reason not to feed your cat leftovers from your meat dinner is bones. While bones are a normal part of a cat’s diet in the wild, where they will kill an animal and eat it whole, these are raw bones. Raw bones have a relatively soft consistency, and cats can break them up with their teeth and digest them. When bones are cooked, they become brittle and instead of breaking up into edible pieces, they crack into shards which can cause obstructions or punctures in your cat’s throat and digestive system.

5. Milk and Cheese — Okay, but a common allergen

Growing up, the image of a cat lapping milk out of a bowl embedded itself in my mind as normal cat behavior, so when I become a cat parent I was surprised to learn that many cats are lactose intolerant. So cats, like people who are lactose intolerant, cannot digest the lactose in milk and cheese, which results in vomiting and diarrhea. If your cat is not lactose intolerant, they may love milk and cheese (my cat loves cheese), but it should still be fed to them only in moderation, as it is high in fat and cholesterol so it can be bad for their weight. There is also lactose-free cat milk available if you rely on milk as a source of hydration for your cat but worry that they might be intolerant.

6. Raw Meat — Okay with Proper Preparation

When you look at lists of foods that cats can’t eat, you will often see raw meat on the list, which is a surprise, since this is what cats naturally eat in the wild. The fear with raw meat is bacteria such as salmonella and E. Coli. But this is actually more of a threat for the human preparing the food than the cat diners, who have a higher tolerance to this kind of bacteria than humans. Nevertheless, when feeding your cat raw meat, be sure that it has been prepared in a safe and clean environment.

7. Raw Fish — Moderation

Fish again is something that cats eat naturally in the wild, but is commonly found on lists of foods that cat should not eat. This is because many types of fish (including anchovies, sardines, herring, carp, mussels, and clams) contain thiaminase enzymes, which can break down and lead to thiaminase deficiency in cats. This interferes with their ability to use vitamin

(continued on next page)

(“21 Foods That You Should NOT Be Feeding Your Cat” cont.)

B, which can, in turn, result in serious neurological problems. For this reason, raw fish should be eaten in moderation, as a complement to a major meat diet, to avoid excess thiaminase. The same risk does not exist with cooked fish as the cooking process renders these enzymes harmless.

8. Raw Eggs — Avoid

Raw eggs are another one to avoid because of the risk of salmonella and E. Coli, which are difficult to guard against when it comes to eggs. But in addition, the protein found in raw egg whites contains avidin, which can interfere with cats’ absorption of the biotin, which in turn blocks a cat’s ability to use other B vitamins. This is often first evident in a rough coat and dry flaky skin.

9. Onions, Garlic, and Chives — Avoid

While a little bit of onion, garlic or chive in a sauce is unlikely to cause your cat any problems, they are best avoided in large quantities. All members of the onion family can break down a cat’s red blood cells and lead to anemia if eaten in sufficient quantities. Chives, in particular, can also cause gastrointestinal problems, which means that it is not an ideal ingredient for cat food, though you will sometimes find it as a trace ingredient. If you have chive plants in your kitchen or garden, best keep an eye out and ensure your cat is not snacking on them.

10. Mushrooms — Avoid

While not all mushrooms are dangerous to cats, knowing which are OK and which are incredibly toxic can be very difficult, so they are best avoided altogether. Wild mushrooms can be particularly harmful and can induce vomiting, diarrhea, drooling and eventually liver damage. Unfortunately, symptoms usually only appear six to 24 hours after ingestion, so by this time the mushrooms are firmly in your cat’s system, minimizing treatment options.

11. Grapes and Raisins — Avoid

The evidence here is unclear, so it is a case of better safe than sorry. There is good evidence to show that dogs can suffer kidney failure from eating grapes and raisins. The evidence that the same is true for cats is currently only anecdotal but doesn’t seem worth the risk. Reported symptoms include vomiting and hyperactivity. So keep grapes and raisins out of reach of kitties that like to steal treats from the table.

12. Green Tomatoes and Potatoes — Avoid

Unripe tomatoes and potatoes contain a poisonous alkaloid called Glycoalkaloid Solanine, which can cause your cat major gastrointestinal problems. Both of these are often ingredients in dry cat foods but aren’t something that you should worry about in this context. Cat food manufacturers use ripe tomatoes and potatoes and they are also cooked, transforming the alkaloid and rendering it harmless.

13. Nuts — Avoid

You might think that nuts make a good addition to a cat’s diet as an excellent source of fiber, protein, and healthy fats, but not so fast. Some nuts, such as macadamias, are poisonous to cats. While other nuts, such as Brazil nuts and almonds aren’t inherently dangerous, but they are high in fat and calories. Just a few nuts can push your cat significantly over their daily calorie intake and the high concentration of fat can cause diarrhea and vomiting.

14. Caffeine — Toxic

Sharing a cup of tea with your cat should only ever be in the ↗

(“21 Foods That You Should NOT Be Feeding Your Cat” cont.)

metaphorical sense! Anything that contains caffeine, including tea, coffee, soft drinks and chocolate, should be off the menu as far as your cat is concerned. Small quantities can give your cat rapid breathing, heart palpitations and muscle tremors. In large quantities, caffeine is fatal, and there is no antidote. As well as looking out for your cat stealing a sip from your cup, make sure they do not accidentally eat coffee beans or grinds.

15. Chocolate — Toxic

As well as containing caffeine, chocolate also contains theobromine, which again can cause cats heart problems, muscle tremors and seizures. It is in all varieties of chocolate, though dark chocolate and unsweetened chocolate have the highest concentration. Fortunately, in general, cats won’t be tempted to eat chocolate on their own, so it is up to you not to coax them to share a treat with you.

16. Xylitol — Toxic

We all know that artificial sweeteners are bad for us as humans, so it is no surprise that the same is true for cats. It is found in many processed foods for humans, so these should never be shared with feline friends. Consumption can cause a severe drop in blood sugar levels which can lead to seizures and convulsions and even death by liver failure if it is consumed in large enough quantities. Do something good for both your and your cat’s health and expel these kinds of processed foods from your home.

17. Alcohol — Toxic

Even if you consider yourself a lightweight, you are nothing compared to your cat! As little as one tablespoon of alcohol can cause them serious brain and liver problems, and just two teaspoons of whiskey can send a five-pound cat into a coma. While you might think it is fun to give your cat a small sip while sharing a drink with friends, it could be lethal.

18. Yeast Dough — Toxic

If you are a baker and your cat likes to steal scraps, then be extra wary when it comes to yeast dough. Just as yeast dough rises in order to make the fluffy bread that we love, when cats ingest the dough it can expand in their stomachs, stretching their abdomen and causing serious pain. Moreover, when the yeast ferments, it can create alcohol, which we have already talked about as being deadly poisonous to cats.

19. Dog Food — Avoid

While dog food and cat food may seem similar, they are in fact quite different. Principally dogs can live off a vegetarian diet and therefore usually have much more plant product in their feed. Cats, on the other hand, have evolved as consummate carnivores and many of the essential compounds that they need they are only able to produce from eating animal-based protein.

They cannot substitute this animal-based protein for plant-based proteins as dogs and humans can. This means that a diet of dog food will quickly leave your cat with malnutrition. If you catch your cat stealing food from your dog’s bowl once,

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(“21 Foods That You Should NOT Be Feeding Your Cat” cont.)

it is nothing to really worry about. However, don't let them make it a habit. They shouldn't be filling up on food that is not right for them.

20. Treats — In Moderation

While cat treats certainly aren't toxic for your cat, they are one of the main causes of cat obesity as they are generally high in calories. The average house cat only really needs to eat about 200 calories a day and most cat parents are already overfeeding their pets with normal food. Add treats into the mix and you may quickly find yourself with a cat with a serious weight problem. And just like with humans, it is much easier to put it on than lose it.

21. Your Medicine — Toxic

While it may seem obvious to say that you should not be giving your cat your medicine, it is surprising the number of cats that are poisoned in this way. We know that children need smaller medicine doses than adults, so imagine how small a dose your seven-pound cat would need of that medicine.

Moreover, common human medicines such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen can be deadly to cats even when consumed in only small quantities. Keep your medicine cabinet both child and cat-proof.

What to Do If Your Cat Eats Something They Shouldn't

If you suspect that your cat has eaten something that they shouldn't, take them to the vet right away as the cure depends on what they have ingested. Try and figure out when they ate the offending item and how much of it they have eaten. If they haven't eaten much, it may be a matter of passing a few uncomfortable days.

If they have got their paws on a whole bag of wild mushrooms, they will probably need to have their stomach pumped. Also, keep track of their symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhea. And don't complain about the cleanup—in this case, it is a matter of better out than in! ☐



How NOT To Play With Your Cat

by Dr. Marty Goldstein

Did you know there's a WRONG way to play with your cat? You see, sometimes cat parents think they're playing in a way that's entertaining for their furry friend. When in reality, their cat isn't having much fun.

For instance, here are two common playtime "mistakes" some cat parents can make:

- Wiggling the toy in your cat's face. While this may seem like a good way to get your cat's attention, chances are they'll get confused or even annoyed. Out in the wild, your cat would be stalking and catching real, live prey which usually hides...so try to be more subtle and move the toy just out of their claw's reach instead.
- Playing in wide-open spaces. Now, some confident felines won't have an issue playing in exposed spaces, like in the center of your living room or in your hallway. Many kitties LOVE to stealthily hide behind objects and sneak up on the toy... so try playing in an area with plenty of spots to hide in and see if your cat likes this new "terrain" more. ↗

(“How NOT to Play With Your Cat” cont.)

Now that I've covered the "don'ts," let me show you a game that both you AND your furry friend will find fun. It's all comes down to stimulating your cat's natural hunter instinct...by recreating "the chase." This way, you can help stimulate your kitty's mind and their natural instincts AND give them a fun workout.

Here's how to play:

You will need:

- A wand toy — I recommend using an interactive wand toy with a feather or "teaser" at the end because they're easy to control.
- 3-4 obstacles — Things like pillows, paper bags or empty boxes can make great hiding spots for your kitty so they can sneak up on their "prey."

Step #1: Pick a distraction-free room to play, and then arrange the obstacles a few feet away from each other. (If your cat is super curious like mine are, this will likely be enough to get them to come over to explore.)

Step #2: Grab the wand and "scurry" it around on the ground a few feet away from your cat to get their attention.

Step #3: At this point, your cat's eyes will probably look larger as they stare down their "prey" which, in this case, means they're excited.

Next, hide the toy behind some furniture or one of the obstacles and move the wand around to make "scampering" sounds which will mimic the way prey would hide from your cat.

Step #4: After a few seconds, present the toy again and let your cat stalk the toy by slightly moving it in place.

Your stealthy cat will likely sneak around the furniture or obstacles you've set up to move closer to the toy.

Step #5: It's time for the chase! Keep the toy just out of their full grasp and let your cat chase and bat it.

Step #6: When you see them crouched low to the ground, wiggling their behind, this means your cat is ready to pounce. At this point, let them fully grab the toy.

Step #7: If your cat catches and intentionally releases the toy, this means they want to keep up the chase! If that's the case, repeat steps 2-6.

For your feline friend, the "thrill of the hunt" is just as fun as successfully catching the prey, which can explain this "catch and release" behavior.

Step #8: Once your cat refuses to let go, or even tries to carry the toy off, let go of the toy so they can enjoy their "reward" and feel satisfied with their catch.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some people will end playtime before their cat properly snatches the toy which can leave their cat feeling dissatisfied, frustrated, and all worked up with no way to burn off their energy. So make sure to always let your cat win before ending the game.

After you've played a complete round with your furry pal, try rearranging the obstacles and play again.

(continued on next page)



(“How NOT to Play With Your Cat” cont.)

I think you’ll find this game can help keep your cat from getting bored AND give them a great workout. Plus, by imitating a real hunt during your next playtime, both you AND your whiskered pal will have a lot more fun together.

I suggest playing with your cat at least 20-30 minutes a day. After all, this kind of active playtime helps keep your cat lean, healthy, and happy. HOWEVER, if you notice your cat seems overly tired or overly-stimulated or if they walk away from the game, stop playing and take a break. In some cases, shorter playtimes might work better for your cat than longer ones, so break up the “hunts” according. That way, they can save their playful energy for next time ☐



How To Play With Your Cat The Right Way

by Jane A. Kelley
— Catster

Playing with your cat isn’t as simple as it seems! Check out these tips on how to play with your cat... including the best cat toys and techniques.

It seems simple at first glance, but how to play with your cat is a bit more complicated than you might think. The way you play with your cat now will set the stage for the strength of your bond and encourage her to play in ways that don’t hurt you or other people. Appropriate cat play is also good for her mental and physical health.

Here are my five favorite cat playtime tips to maximize your cat’s fun, minimize the risk of future bad behavior and distract her from undesirable habits.

1. **Play like her prey:** Believe it or not, there are right and wrong ways to play with your cat.

Exercising your cat’s prey drive, or drive to hunt, with interactive play is a crucial part of your cat’s development and contributes greatly to her quality of life. When using an interactive cat toy such as a feather wand or a mouse on a string, move the toy like the prey it’s supposed to represent.

When birds aren’t flying, for example, they hop around on the ground and then flutter off to land somewhere else. Mice and other rodents scurry with sudden starts and stops, keeping to corners and hidden places. If you’re really serious about learning to play like prey, watch them at work in your yard or study videos of their behavior.

2. **Timing is everything:** Cats’ natural life cycles generally consist of hunting, eating and then sleeping. Playtime before supper can encourage a good appetite. If your cat tends to wake you up in ↗

(“How To Play With Your Cat The Right Way” cont.)

the middle of the night, a 15- or 20-minute play session before you go to bed can help your cat sleep through until morning. Tailor the play to your cat’s own rhythms, though; if she gets the zoomies shortly after she eats, why not accommodate her with an after-dinner game of Chase the Mouse?

3. **Let her win:** It’s really important to let your cat “catch” her prey during the play session. Otherwise, she will get frustrated and either stop playing with you or act out in response to her unfulfilled urges.

If you play with a laser pointer, be sure to have some kitty play sessions with a toy she can catch, too.

4. **NEVER use your fingers when playing with a cat:** It might be cute to see a little kitten batting at your fingers and trying to bite you with her tiny teeth, but when she’s a full-grown cat it won’t be cute at all. It’s much more difficult to train an adult cat out of this behavior than to prevent it, so be sure to tell anyone who visits your cat to use a toy and not their fingers or toes.

5. **Create positive alternatives to bad behavior:** If you have an ankle-attacking cat, keep an interactive toy with you at all times. As soon as you see body language that indicates she’s hunting your legs, distract her with the interactive toy. Do this consistently and your cat will learn to exercise her prey drive on her toy rather than your feet.

If your cat is a door darter, get her attention with her favorite toy and then toss it in the opposite direction as you’re about to leave.

When done on a regular basis, cat play is far and away the best tool for bonding, socializing and training. If you’ve got a cat that’s acting up, give it a try. You’ll be surprised by how well “play therapy” for cats works. ☐

Warning!

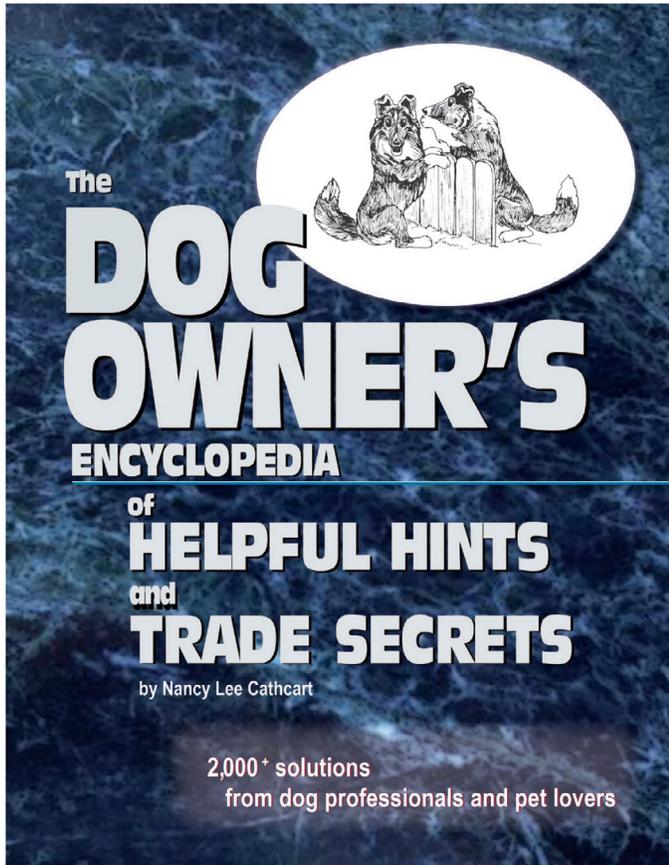
A cat CANNOT spit anything out of his mouth.

This is because whatever he bites or gets into his mouth *must be swallowed* (due to backward-facing barbs located on his tongue). These barbs make it dangerous should your cat get some yarn, string, tinsel, etc. in his mouth because he won’t be able to spit it out.

Do NOT leave anything around your cat or kitten could possibly swallow because he would require surgery or may die. ☐

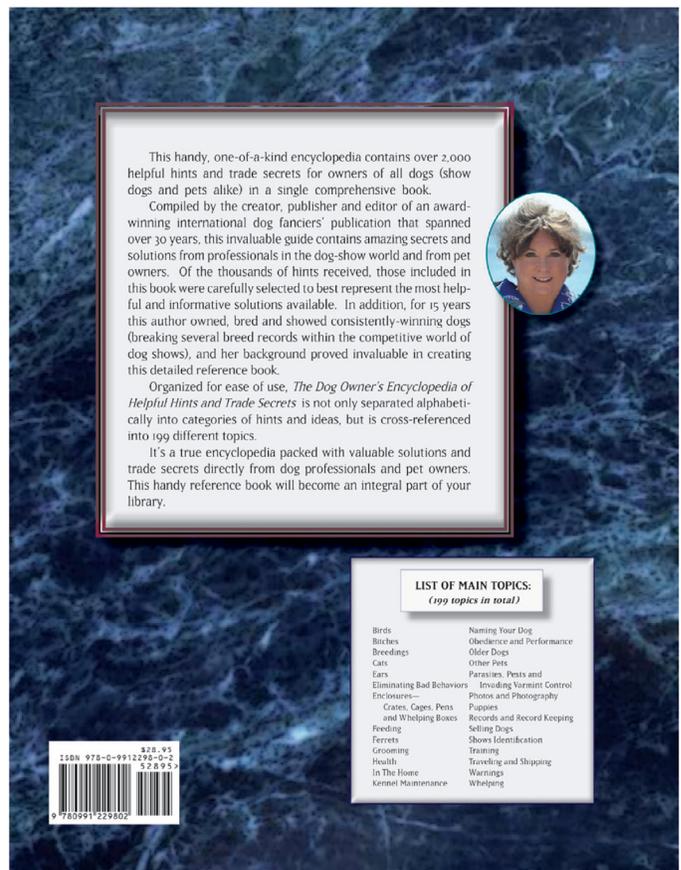


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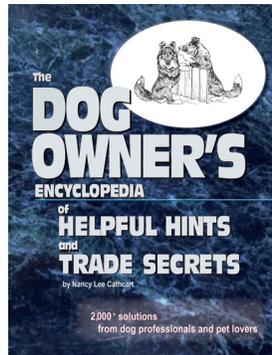
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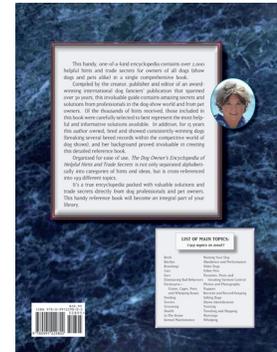
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