



10 Tips to Avoid Online Dog and Cat Adoption SCAMS

This article was originally oriented towards cats, however, it's equally applicable to the purchasing of dogs.

There are online pet adoption scams that can be dangerous. Scammers have been around since the dawn of time, taking advantage of trusting individuals to get what they want. In the age of the internet, scamming has taken on a whole new, and more dangerous, identity. Whether they're posing as a sheik from a far-off country interested in sharing a fortune with you or an interested Craig's List buyer who will authorize a deposit to your Paypal account just as soon as you forward the \$500 shipping and handling fee for courier services, scammers are everywhere.

Scammers have even worked their way into the pet space. Sadly, con artists have been stealing cats and re-selling them to unsuspecting adopters for years. Now sites like Craig's List, where found cats are listed in hopes they might be reunited with their owners, have made it even easier for these con artists to procure the cats they resell by posing as the owner.

Here's how the scam we identified works: a scammer on Craig's List, Facebook or E-bay is "selling" a purebred puppy or kitten (often for free or at a deeply discounted price for the breed). The eager adopter pays the "breeder" and then gets a notice saying the cat is being held at the airport because it is required to have insurance in order to travel. The adopter is told they must send an additional sum of money for the required insurance before the cat can be released.

10 Tips to Avoid Online Cat Scams

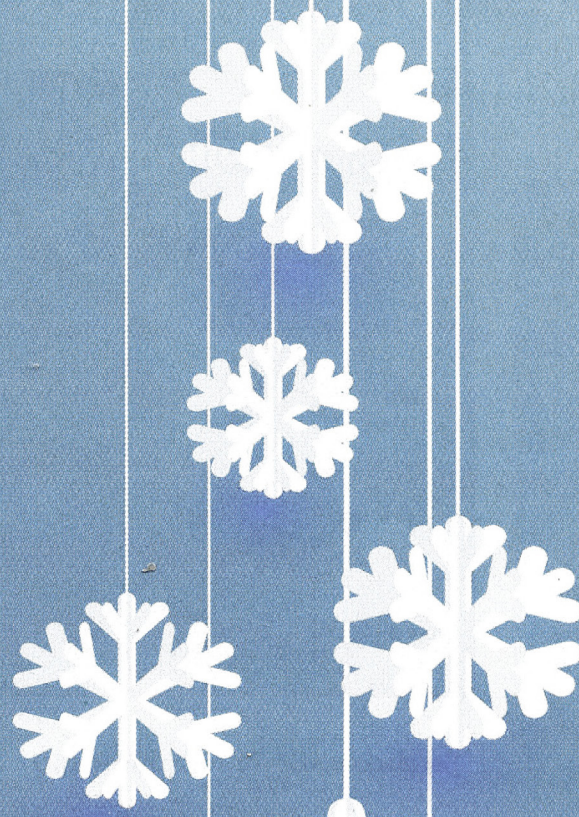
1. Ask for multiple pictures of the cat, including poses with specific items (a recent newspaper, a tennis ball, etc.) to make sure the cat is real.

{Nancy Lee's suggestion: ask to have the breeder send you a video showing your kitten or puppy next to a sign displaying your name and the date of the video.}

2. Ask for a phone number for the person selling the cat and a veterinary clinic the cat has been to. If the seller won't give the numbers, or if they are not US numbers, this is probably a scam. If they do give the phone numbers, call and ask questions.

3. If the seller says they are in a particular state but asks you to send money elsewhere, especially another country, avoid it.

4. If the seller/breeder is not located in the US, avoid it. ↗



("10 Tips to Avoid Online..." cont.)

5. If the person is claiming to be a breeder, ask for breeder registration information. If they won't give it, walk away. If they do give it, verify with the appropriate breeders' group.

6. Never pay in cash via money order or Western Union. Always use a credit card in case you need to dispute the charges.

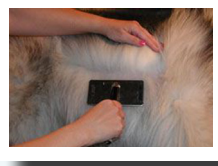
7. Be skeptical if the seller adds "additional charges" such as: fees for a vet visit, a different crate, travel expenses, pet insurance, etc. Pet insurance is NOT required for a cat to be shipped or to travel.

8. Don't trust a seller that pushes for the sale to happen quickly by saying they are moving, they have to get rid of the cat asap, they can't take care of the cat anymore or that harm may come to the cat.

9. Do research to get a sense of what a fair price is for the breed you are interested in adopting. Think twice if they are selling a purebred dog for free or at a very low price for the breed.

10. It should be a red flag if e-mail communications have broken English or very poor grammar.

Adopting a new cat or dog is an exciting time. Do your research and don't cut corners during the adoption process. Your best bet is to find an ethical breeder or a reputable local rescue group or shelter. ☐



How to Groom a Dog With a Double Coat

— <https://wagwalking.com/>

Introduction

Keeping your dog well-groomed is an important part of his overall good health and appearance, especially when you have a dog with a double coat. Not only does keeping him groomed help reduce the incredible amount of dog hair constantly covering everything in your house, it can help the two of you bond more closely than you already are.

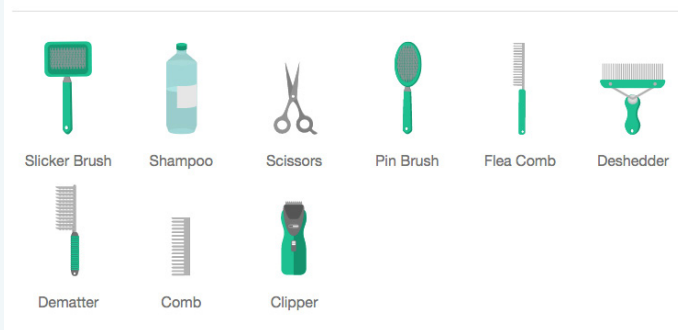
However, when you have a dog with a second coat, grooming can seem like an insurmountable task that is best left to a professional groomer. Your pup's double coat is typically a combination of very short, short, and longer hairs. Knowing how to groom him properly will make the process easier and more enjoyable for both of you.

Dog's Perspective

Your dog naturally sheds a large part of his coat twice each year, once in the fall and once in the spring. But since your dog no longer lives in the wild, he doesn't have the advantage of being able to aid in this process by rubbing himself in the brush and long grasses.

Living at home, the best he can hope for is rubbing himself on the carpet or furniture, which simply isn't good enough. It is your job to give your pup a good grooming at least once a week to help remove the extra hair and keep him looking his best, he is sure to appreciate it!

The Undercoat Rake Method



STEP 1: Start by de-matting his coat

Grab a de-matting rake. This tool is designed to work its way easily through any mats in your dog's fur, most especially those in his thick undercoat. When there is no resistance the protective blade cover stays put, covering the blades and allowing you to work your way through the fur. When you encounter a mat, the protector will be pushed back out of the way allowing the rake to cut through the mats.

STEP 2: Next up, the shedding tool

Using a shedding tool, gently brush your pup's hair in the direction it grows naturally.

You need to work from head to tail, using short strokes (keeping them at six inches or less works best). Of course, be sure to clean 7

("How to Groom a Dog..." cont.)

out the tool on a regular basis and keep working over your pup's coat until the brush finally comes out clean.

STEP 3: Time for a bath

Time to head to the tub. Start by running enough warm water to cover your pup to a depth you are capable of working with and that your pup is comfortable being in. Keep it lukewarm (too cold and it will make your pup uncomfortable, too hot and you could injure your pooch).

It helps if you have one of those shower heads on a long hose or one you can attach to the spigot.

Be sure to keep the water out of his eyes and ears as you thoroughly soak his coat.

STEP 4: Break out the shampoo

Using a shampoo designed for dogs, gently rub it into his coat making sure to reach all the way down to his skin so that you get everything clean.

You can use cotton balls to help keep the water out of his ears or you can use your hands.

STEP 5: Time to rinse

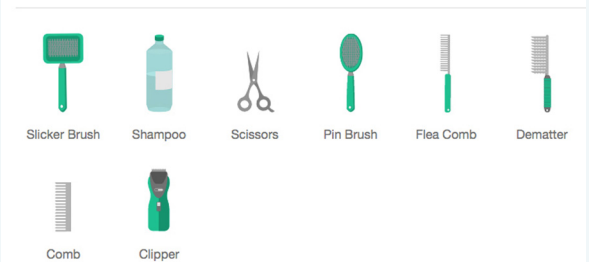
Using the shower head or a pitcher, rinse your pup's coat thoroughly. Be sure to rinse until there is no more shampoo coming out of his coat. You need to be thorough, as leaving shampoo in his coat could lead to skin problems or cause other health issues.

STEP 6: The finishing touches

Grab a boar bristle brush and go over your pup's coat one more time. Using this type of brush will help you to remove any final tangles and give him a smooth, shiny coat.

Allow your pup's coat to air dry naturally and use an undercoat brush to go over his entire body one last time to remove any remaining undercoat hair that happens to be loose and to help distribute his natural oils throughout his coat.

The More than One Brush Method



STEP 1: Start with a bath

One great way to get started grooming your double-coated dog is to give him a nice bath first to remove dirt, debris, and who-knows-what that is hiding under all that hair. Bathing him first will also help to reduce the number of mats and tangles you have to deal with. It also gives you a clean pup to work with, which is always much nicer. A nice warm bath will also help to relax your pup.

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("How to Groom a Dog..." cont.)

STEP 2: Stand and deliver

Well not quite, but have your pup come to your chosen grooming spot (try and use the same one every time) and stand in place. This will give him a sense of place, one that he can readily associate with being groomed.

STEP 3: The pin brush

Using a pin brush or undercoat rake, start working on his undercoat to remove any mats you find. You need to start brushing at skin level and work your way out to a point about two inches from the end of his coat hairs. This will bring the mats out to where you can deal with them.

You can use scissors to do this or an undercoat rake that is designed to cut the mats out as it finds them.

STEP 4: Time to hit the shedding brush

Now that you have bathed your pup and removed the mats, it's time to work on all that extra hair. For this, you need a shedding brush. This brush is specifically designed to help remove any excess hair from your pup's undercoat.

Use this tool going over his entire coat gently, cleaning out the brush frequently until it comes out clean. Be gentle so you don't hurt your pup by yanking on his hair.

STEP 5: Down to the last clip

Now give him a good all-over brushing using a boar hair brush to smooth his coat.

Use either a pair of scissors or electric clippers trim his coat as needed, taking care not to nick your pup's skin.

One last brush and your pup is now looking his best.

You should brush his coat every week as this will help to keep down the number of mats you have to deal with and spread his natural oils throughout his coat.

Caution and Considerations

- First and foremost, you should never shave a dog who has a thick or double undercoat as this may lead to sunburn and several other medical conditions.
- Shaving him down to the skin may also cause his coat to grow back in patches.
- If you are not sure which way your pup's hair grows or how often he should be groomed, be sure to talk to your vet.
- Your pet store carries a variety of detanglers made just for dogs with long coats. Used properly, they can make grooming your dog's hair much easier.
- If your dog is "blowing out" his coat, you may find it helps to brush him daily to keep down the mats and the amount of hair you have to clean up. It might also help extend the life of your vacuum cleaner!
- One last thing, be sure you rinse all traces of shampoo from your pup's coat, as it can lead to a number of complications.

Conclusion

Not only will your pup look and feel much better when you keep him properly groomed, but you can be proud of the fact you have learned to groom your double-coated pup all by yourself. Imagine how much money you will be saving over the course of your pup's life!

Editor's note— Below are more articles on grooming a double-coated dog:

- <https://wagwalking.com/grooming/groom-a-double-coated-dog/>
- <https://www.dogizone.com/tips-for-grooming-a-double-coated-dog/>
- <https://topdogtips.com/double-coated-dogs/>
- <https://www.authenticdogs.com/double-coated-dogs-grooming/> ☐

Holiday Safety Tips

— ASPCA



The holiday season is upon us, and many pet parents plan to include their furry companions in the festivities. As you gear up for the holidays, it is important to try to keep your pet's eating and exercise habits as close to their normal routine as possible. Also, please be sure to steer pets clear of the following unhealthy treats, toxic plants and dangerous decorations.

Be Careful with Seasonal Plants and Decorations

• **Oh, Christmas Tree:** Securely anchor your Christmas tree so it doesn't tip and fall, causing possible injury to your pet.

This will also prevent the tree water—which may contain fertilizers that can cause stomach upset—from spilling. Stagnant tree water is a breeding ground for bacteria, and your pet could end up with nausea or diarrhea should he imbibe.

• **Avoid Mistletoe and Holly:** Holly, when ingested, can cause pets to suffer nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Mistletoe can cause gastrointestinal upset and cardiovascular problems.

Many varieties of lilies can cause kidney failure in cats if ingested.

Opt for just-as-jolly artificial plants made from silk or plastic, or choose a pet-safe bouquet.

• **Tinsel-less Town:** Kitties love this sparkly, light-catching "toy" that's easy to bat around and carry in their mouths. But a nibble can lead to a swallow, which can lead to an obstructed digestive tract, severe vomiting, dehydration and possible surgery. It's best to brighten your boughs with something other than tinsel.

• **That Holiday Glow:** Don't leave lighted candles unattended. Pets may burn themselves or cause a fire if they knock candles over.

Be sure to use appropriate candle holders, placed on a stable surface.

If you leave the room, put the candle out!

• **Wired Up:** Keep wires, batteries and glass or plastic ornaments out of paws' reach. A wire can deliver a potentially lethal electrical shock and a punctured battery can cause burns to the mouth and esophagus, while shards of breakable ornaments can damage your pet's mouth and digestive tract.

Avoid Holiday Food Dangers

• **Skip the Sweets:** By now you know not to feed your pets chocolate and anything sweetened with xylitol, but do you know the lengths to which an enterprising pet will go to chomp on something yummy?

Make sure to keep your pets away from the table and unattended plates of food, and be sure to secure the lids on garbage cans.

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("Holiday Safety Tips" cont.)

- **Leave the Leftovers:** Fatty, spicy and no-no human foods, as well as bones, should not be fed to your furry friends. Pets can join the festivities in other fun ways that won't lead to costly medical bills.

- **Careful with Cocktails:** If your celebration includes adult holiday beverages, be sure to place your unattended alcoholic drinks where pets cannot get to them.

If ingested, your pet could become weak, ill and may even go into a coma, possibly resulting in death from respiratory failure.

- **Selecting Special Treats:** Looking to stuff your pet's stockings? Stick with chew toys that are basically indestructible. Kongs that can be stuffed with healthy foods or chew treats that are designed to be safely digestible.

Long, stringy things are a feline's dream, but the most risky toys for cats involve ribbon, yarn and loose little parts that can get stuck in the intestines, often necessitating surgery. Surprise kitty with a new ball that's too big to swallow, a stuffed catnip toy or the interactive cat dancer.

Please visit our *People Foods to Avoid Feeding Your Pets* page for more information (<https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/people-foods-avoid-feeding-your-pets>).

Plan a Pet-Safe Holiday Gathering

- **House Rules:** If your animal-loving guests would like to give your pets a little extra attention and exercise while you're busy tending to the party, ask them to feel free to start a nice play or petting session.

- **Put the Meds Away:** Make sure all of your medications are locked behind secure doors.

Be sure to tell your guests to keep their medicines zipped up and packed away, too.

- **A Room of Their Own:** Give your pet his own quiet space to retreat to—complete with fresh water and a place to snuggle. Shy pups and cats might want to hide out under a piece of furniture, in their carrying case or in a separate room away from the hubbub.

- **New Year's Noise:** As you count down to the new year, please keep in mind that strings of thrown confetti can get lodged in a cat's intestines, if ingested, perhaps necessitating surgery.

Noisy poppers can terrify pets and cause possible damage to sensitive ears. Remember that many pets are also scared of fireworks, so be sure to secure them in a safe, escape-proof area as midnight approaches.

Share our holiday safety tips with others! Download this shareable PDF for your friends and family (<https://www.asPCA.org/sites/default/files/holiday-pet-safety-infographic-120817.pdf>). □

Dear Reader,

I'm STILL running out of informative articles to include in your future newsletters.

Please send me suggestions of what I may research and then share with you.

Thanking you in advance,
Nancy Lee □



How to Train Your Dog at Home and Save Money

by CouponChief

Have a new furry friend and wondering how to train him? Professional dog training can be costly, so we've created a guide to training your pup at home, DIY style. From basic commands like "sit" and "stay" to leash training your pooch, these tips will help you save money while spending quality time with your new pal.

The Cost of Professional Dog Training

Professional Dog Training Costs

\$120-\$200	\$199	\$229
Private Group	PetSmart	Petco
6-8 weeks of training	6 weeks of training	12 weeks of training

While it's important for your dog to be trained properly, professional dog training classes can get expensive quickly. Here are a few price breakdowns according to HomeGuide:

Pre-class evaluations: \$25-\$75

Group dog training: \$30-\$50 per class

Private dog training: \$45-\$120 per hour-long session

6-class training package: \$200-\$600

Obedience school: \$500-\$1,250 per week

Instead of covering these expenses for a professional dog trainer, consider training your dog at home. You'll save significant money, avoid the liabilities and hurdles associated with being in group settings, and get to spend quality time strengthening the bond with your pup.

Five Basic Obedience Commands to Teach Your Dog

Teaching your dog tricks isn't just about showing off to your friends, it's also about keeping your dog safe from dangerous objects, in social situations and in emergencies. For example, the "leave it" command can be used if a dog comes in contact with a toxic food they shouldn't have.

Dogs can begin at-home obedience training as early as puppyhood, as puppies are fast learners and love to please. Because puppies are naturally curious and excited, it's important to be patient and gentle when training your new pup at home.

Use the steps below to teach your dog five of the most basic and important obedience commands at home.

1. **Sit** — "Sit" is one of the most basic commands your dog can learn, but it's also the foundation for most other obedience commands and tricks. Here's how to teach it to your pooch:

- Stand in front of your dog with a treat in your hand.
- Show your dog the treat by holding it near their nose.

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("How to Train Your Dog at Home..." cont.)

- Raise the treat up slightly and say, "sit."
- As your dog follows the treat with their eyes, use your other hand to gently guide their backside down into a sitting position.
- Once your dog is sitting, reward them with the treat and verbal praise.
- Repeat this command several times until your dog sits without needing physical guidance.

Pup Tip: Our favorite low-cost, healthy treats perfect for training are Hill's Natural Jerky Strips. You can get them from Petco for less than \$5 per bag!

2. Stay — Teaching your dog "stay" encourages your pup to stay put, even if you walk away. Use these steps to teach your dog to stay:

- Tell your dog to sit.
- Hold your hand in front of you, palm facing your dog, and say "stay."
- Take a step backward.
- If your dog follows you, have them return to a sitting position and repeat.
- If your dog stays still, reward them with a treat and verbal praise.
- As your dog begins to understand the command, increase the number of steps you take away from them.
- Always reward your pup for following the command, even if only for a short time.

Pup Tip: Reward your pup with new toys to play with. BarkBox delivers new toys and treats to your door for just \$22 per month!

3. Lie Down — This command is especially helpful for your dog to know when guests are visiting, when you and your dog are in public, or if your dog is anxious or excited.

- Hold a treat in one hand, fist closed.
- Tell your dog to sit.
- Show your dog your closed fist and allow them to smell the treat.
- As they smell the treat, move your closed fist to the floor.
- Say "lie down" or "down."
- Your dog should follow your hand until they are laying down.
- Once they are laying down, give them the treat and praise them.
- Repeat until your dog can perform the command without a treat.

Pup Tip: Running out of treats? Chewy delivers all your favorite pet supplies to your door at great prices.

While gentle guidance can be helpful, it's important to never physically force your dog into a position. If your dog tries to get up or won't lie down, say "no" and remove the treat. Repeat the above steps until they understand the command.

4. Come — "Come" is a crucial command for all dogs to know, as it can keep them safe if they are off-leash or get out of the yard accidentally. It's best to begin training for this command in a quiet environment like your home or backyard to reduce distractions.

- Tell your dog to sit and stay.
- Walk a short distance away.
- Say "come" and hold out a treat.
- Reward your dog when they've come to you.
- Repeat until your dog can perform the command without a treat. ↗

("How to Train Your Dog at Home..." cont.)

Pup Tip: Looking for an eco-friendly treat option? Check out the Shameless Pets brand at PupJoy!

5. Leave It — Though this command involves more patience and commitment, it's an important one for your dog to know. It can help them stay safe if they get curious about something they shouldn't have, like toxic foods, sharp objects, or other dangerous things.

Phase 1: Beginner

- Hold a treat in one hand, fist closed.
- Show your dog your closed fist and allow them to smell the treat.
- Your dog may get excited and try to get the treat out of your hand.
- Say "leave it" firmly.
- Once your dog is calm, give them the treat.
- Repeat steps 1–4, but wait for your dog to move away from the treat.
- Give your dog the treat only when they've moved away from your fist.

Phase 2: Intermediate

- Place a treat on the floor and cover it with one hand.
- Say "leave it."
- Once your dog ignores the treat and looks at you, let them have the treat.
- Repeat steps 1–3 until your dog ignores the treat every time.
- Once your dog has mastered steps 1–4, command them to "sit."
- Place a treat on the floor, but leave it uncovered.
- Say "leave it."
- If your dog tries to get the treat, have them return to "sit."
- Reward them for successfully completing the command.
- Repeat steps 5–9 until your dog ignores the treat every time.

Pup Tip: Have a Furbo dog camera laying around? Have the machine dispense a treat when you aren't in the room, give the "leave it" command in the microphone, then see what your dog does!

How to Crate Train Your Dog

According to the Humane Society, crate training "takes advantage of your dog's natural instincts as a den animal" and is an important part of household life for a dog. When done correctly, your dog will think of their crate as a comforting, safe place to rest. Additionally, crate training your pup will give you the peace of mind that your dog is safe and secure (and not tearing up your house) while you're out.

There are several types of crates available at different price points. It's important to choose a crate that will give your dog enough room to stand up, turn around, and lie down comfortably. If choosing a crate for a growing puppy, pick one that will accommodate their adult size and

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("How to Train Your Dog at Home..." cont.)

block off extra space until they have grown.

Simple Ways to Save on Crate Training

Hoping to save some money on crate training? Local animal shelters often rent out crates, which can be helpful for puppy owners. Renting a crate allows you to trade in the crate as your puppy grows and may be more cost-effective than investing in an expensive crate your pup will only grow out of as they age.

Feeling crafty? Try a DIY project to turn a less-than-attractive dog crate into a gorgeous piece of furniture! There are plenty of online tutorials to help you transform your dog's kennel.

Finally, check sites like eBay for used crates. As puppies grow, it's time to upgrade crates, so there are always plenty of low-cost, gently used options available.

Important Rules to Follow When Crate Training

No one likes to be cooped up in a small space for long. Keep these rules in mind when crate training your dog or puppy.

- The crate should never be used as a punishment for your dog. The crate should be associated with safety and comfort, so using it as punishment will deter your dog from feeling comfortable while inside.
- Never leave your dog in the crate for more than two to three hours. Dogs need exercise, social interaction, and time outside to relieve themselves. If you need to leave your dog for long periods of time, hire a pet sitter, have a family member come over or take your pup to a doggy daycare.
- Don't leave young puppies in the crate for more than an hour, as they have a harder time controlling their bladders and bowels.
- Never punish your dog for soiling their crate. If they have an accident while in their crate, you may have left them inside too long.
- Crate your dog only until you can trust them to be on their best behavior when they're alone in the house. Once you know your pup won't destroy the house, the crate should be a place they go voluntarily to rest.

For more advice on successfully crate training your dog, visit the Humane Society's website or consult a licensed veterinarian.

How to House Train Your Dog

While crate training is an important part of house training your dog, there are other things you can do to help your pup get used to life inside. The key to house training your pup, especially a young puppy, is patience and understanding. It may take up to a year for your dog to be fully potty trained.

Here are a few tips to follow when house training your dog or puppy:

- Stick to a regular feeding schedule. Take away your pup's food between meals to help them regulate their needs.
- Take them outside every 30 minutes to one hour. You should also take your dog or puppy outside as soon as you wake up in the morning (you may need to set an alarm if you tend to sleep in), just before bed every night, before you plan to leave the house, or after your pup wakes up from a nap.

Take them to the same place outside. The scent will prompt your dog to continue using that location outside to do their business.

- Stay with your puppy when they're outside. As they begin to master house training skills, it's okay to leave them outside unattended for brief periods. ↗

("How to Train Your Dog at Home..." cont.)

• Praise your puppy for going outside. Your dog will associate the praise with the action, so be ready to give them a good ear scratching when they're done!

• Never rub your puppy's face in the soil if they have an accident inside, especially if you came across the evidence but didn't see the act. If you catch them in the act, give them a stern "no" and immediately take them outside. Punishing your pup for an accident will only teach them to fear you.

• Clean accidents with an enzymatic spray, as these cleaners break down odors more effectively and will prevent your pup from returning to the same place.

How to Save on House Training

To cut down on costs, try skipping the pricey puppy training pads. While they are helpful for teaching your dog to relieve themselves in an approved place, they can be detrimental to the ultimate goal of getting your dog to relieve themselves outside only.

Unfortunately, accidents happen. Potty training any baby isn't fail-proof! When they do, don't pay an arm and a leg for costly sprays and cleaners when you can make your own at home.

Here's a quick recipe for a stain and odor remover:

- 2 cups of vinegar
- 2 cups of warm water
- 4 tablespoons of baking soda

How to Leash Train Your Dog

There are big differences in teaching a puppy to walk on a leash versus teaching an adult dog to walk on a leash, but there are a few things to keep in mind regardless of your dog's age.

- Let your dog get used to the collar or harness before going outside. It may take them a while to adjust to the feeling, so reinforce this time with play and treats!
- Practice walking on a leash inside first to minimize distractions. Walk through your house with your pup, praising them for good behavior.

• Practice walking in your backyard. The sights, smells, and noises of the outdoors are enough to overwhelm any dog, so take them somewhere they're familiar with first.

Your dog or puppy will probably want to cover ground fast when exploring outside, so they may pull or tug on their leash. Instead of yanking on the leash or yelling at them, use these tricks:

• Try the "tree" trick. If your dog is pulling on the leash and won't walk beside you, turn yourself into a "tree" by standing still and refusing to move. Wait until your dog returns to your side before continuing the walk. This tactic can also help you avoid spending money on expensive harnesses or leads designed for dogs that pull.

• Be proactive. If you see another person or animal coming towards you while walking, be proactive by crossing the street or creating distance. Once you're at a safe distance, reward them with a treat or affection. This will redirect your pup's attention and prevent them from lunging.

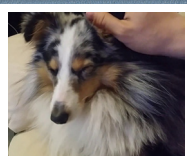
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("How to Train Your Dog at Home..." cont.)

- Have them sit. Periodically asking your dog to sit during a walk is a good way to break their focus and bring their attention back to you. If your dog starts to get too excited or anxious during a walk, ask them to sit for a few minutes to calm down.

There are many resources to help you and your dog learn these basic training skills together. AKC provides free videos on many topics, including leash training, house-training, and more.

Whether you've just adopted an older shelter dog or have a brand new puppy, it's important to help your pup adjust to life with you by training them correctly. Because professional training can be expensive, always look for discounts and don't be afraid to ask your local animal shelter or veterinarian for advice. □



What Happens If My Dog Eats a Hair Tie?

— PetPlace

Some dogs will eat just about anything. That doesn't mean, however, that they can or should. Dogs have resilient stomachs and digestive tracts, but their less-than-picky palates can easily get the better of them. Certain household objects could present a choking or poisoning risk and even result in intestinal blockages if swallowed.

Hair ties are hard to keep track of and easy for dogs to find. Does swallowing a hair tie mean your dog should take a trip to the emergency veterinarian? Not necessarily, but it should definitely get your attention.

Risks of Swallowing a Hair Tie

For such small objects, hair ties can spell big trouble for hungry dogs. The issues can start immediately if a hair tie becomes lodged in your dog's throat. In these instances, dogs will typically cough and gag (similar to a person choking on food or a foreign object). It's not hard to tell if your dog is choking, but addressing the issue could be tricky. Always exercise extreme caution while attempting to dislodge foreign objects.

Farther down the digestive tract, hair ties present additional complications. Small dogs in particular may find them challenging or impossible to pass. As such, they can become stuck in the stomach or intestines, causing discomfort and more severe symptoms. In extreme cases, foreign objects like hair ties may puncture or tear a dog's intestinal walls. This can lead to potentially life-threatening inflammation and infection if it's not addressed quickly.

The prognosis for dogs who have ingested hair ties and other foreign objects is generally good. Depending on where the object is lodged, your veterinarian may remove it via endoscopy or through a more invasive surgical procedure. ↗

("What Happens If My Dog Eats a Hair Tie?" cont.)

Signs of Trouble

Have some of your hair ties gone missing? Keep a close eye on your dog, because they may be the culprit. Watch out for vomiting and look for hair ties in their stool. If they're vomiting or experiencing diarrhea and you still can't find the hair tie, they may be suffering from an intestinal obstruction.

Watch out for these additional warning signs too:

- Abdominal pain
- Behavioral changes like aggression or skittishness
- Constipation
- Loss of appetite

Over time, these symptoms can lead to additional complications like severe dehydration and metabolic changes. Quick intervention is key for getting foreign bodies removed and dogs on the mend.

A Warning from Vets

A Texas veterinarian went viral in 2019 after sharing an alarming postoperative photo. The vet removed not one or two, but over 100 hair ties from the stomach of a Goldendoodle. That was in addition to some underwear, candy wrappers, and other indigestible foreign objects.

It's unclear how long the dog had been snacking on hair ties, but their symptoms included constipation, skittishness and a sudden loss of appetite.

The event provided a reminder to pet owners across the globe. Objects like hair ties should be kept in drawers and closed containers, away from the hungry snouts of pets.

While ingesting small foreign objects isn't always cause for concern, some "snacks" will immediately put your dog's health at risk. If your dog is acting unusual or showing other warning signs, reach out to your veterinarian immediately. □

I am not a toy
I am not a
Christmas Present

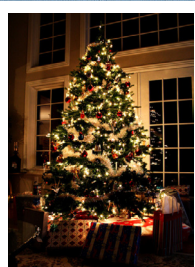
I am not disposable
once the holidays
are over



I am a 15 - 20
year commitment



I am family.



The Ugly Truth About Cats and Christmas Trees

by Jackson Galaxy

Yes, there are inherent difficulties between holiday wants from a human perspective and the natural needs of cats. But all is not ‘Scrooged’ as long as you think creatively and wait for it...COM-PROMISE!

There is some stuff that I think is common sense but I want to make sure I drive it home.

Candles

When it comes to candles, they need to be out of reach of cats. Cats tip over candles and start fires. Cats burn themselves on candles. Make sure they are wall-mounted or a place where cats just can’t get to them.

The same goes for incense.

Wires

Cats get into Christmas trees and will sometimes chew the wires for the lights. You can treat the wires with substances like “Bitter Apple.”

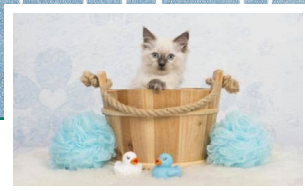
Also, use any of my suggestions for keeping them away from the tree in general OR don’t use electric lights.

Also, there are products like LUME where you can feed electric cords through them from the tree to the outlet and your cats won’t be able to chew through it.

Don’t forget to turn off your tree, put out your candles and incense when you can’t supervise.

Happy and safe holidays to all! ☐

**DON'T FORGET - put
orange peels under
your Christmas tree.
Cats won't bother it.
PLEASE pass this on.**



Take Better Cat Photos...

by Dr. Marty Goldstein

When you’re a cat parent, you’ll find yourself snapping tons of photos of your adorable kitty, as if you were the feline paparazzi. Then, before you know it, your photo albums are full of pictures of your furry best friend.

There’s just one problem. Sometimes, your kitty’s cuteness can be hard to capture because one minute they’re making the most adorable face, however by the time you take the picture, it’s just a kitty-shaped blur.

Well, not to worry because after decades of coaxing furry patients to stay calm (and still) at my clinic I’ve learned a secret that now helps me take great photos of my kitties Miko and Topi.

I’m going to share this secret with you. It turns out that all you have to do is...think like a cat.

You see, in any given situation, your feline pal is concerned with three basic things: safety, rewards and having fun.

To help them stay relaxed and happy during your photo sessions you simply have to keep these three “feline priorities” in mind.

Feline Priority #1:

“Is it safe?”

At my clinic, I had to make sure my patients were as calm and relaxed as possible. By doing that, I could easily examine them. It also allowed them to have a good experience (which made future visits easier.)

My trick was always to speak soothingly to my feline patients and avoid any “scary surprises” (like loud noises or bright lights).

The same thing goes for taking your cat’s picture! A camera flash or the clicking sound of a photo snap can be jarring to your cat’s sensitive eyes and ears. So, turn off the flash and silence the camera shutter “click.”

If you have to use a flash, just try not to aim it directly into your kitty’s eyes. And, if your camera’s loud, try putting on some ambient music to help soothe your cat.

Then, when your “feline model” feels safe with you behind the camera, it’ll be easier to take great photos every time.

Feline Priority #2:

“Is this interesting to me?”

As you know, your furry best friend is first and foremost curious and fun-loving. So, try to always make things fun and engaging for your cat. I used treats and toys to encourage kitties to stand in the right place during an exam.

You can do the same during your photo shoots. Simply use their treats and toys to encourage them into the poses you want.

(continued on the next page)

(*"Take Better Cat Photos..." cont.*)

Give them a little piece of a treat for staying in one spot, for striking the "right" pose, and just for being their adorable feline self. This can make the experience fun for the both of you and help you capture your furry pal's best side every time.

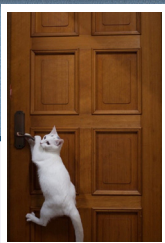
Feline Priority #3:

"Can I leave whenever I want?"

I'm sure you'll agree, your cat likes to be in charge of their own schedule. That's why I always tried to complete my exams as quickly as possible, so my furry patients could go on with their day. Likewise, you should try to keep your photoshoots short and sweet.

In my experience, even with treats and toys, you've got your cat's full attention for about 10 minutes (maximum). So, after you get a few pictures, give your feline super model a break for a few hours. You can always come back after they've had a chance to nap, play, or zoom around the house for a while. Honestly, after setting up your photo, entertaining your kitty, and then taking pictures...you may want to take a quick nap too!

And that's all there is to it. If you keep your kitty's "Feline Priorities" in mind while trying to get the perfect picture, you can help them feel like a real superstar, and you'll both have more fun, too! ☐



Why Do Cats Hate Closed Doors?

by *FloppyCats*

As any cat owner knows, kitties absolutely hate closed doors. They can be at their calmest, but when that door is shut, their inner alarm goes off. They meow, they scratch, they fidget and they do not rest until that door is open again. They may or may not choose to go through it once it's open, but it is paramount that they have the option.

Why? Find out as we uncover the main reasons behind this peculiar cat behavior and what you can do to convince them that some doors need to stay shut, at least some of the time.

The Three Main Reasons Why Cats Hate Closed Doors

You may regard their protesting to closed doors as a peculiar behavior, but let's look into the reasons why they become alarmed as soon as a door closes:

Reason No. 1 – Territory

Cats are territorial animals. They mark as often as they can so that it's always clear what they reign over. Even though you may need to close a door to go to the bathroom, to go into your bedroom or your kitchen, what you might be missing is that the door effectively interrupts access to a part of the cat's territory. And that is a problem. So, don't be surprised if your cat meows, scratches, and fidgets. It's a matter of territory that you have to settle. ↗

(*"Why Do Cats Hate Closed Doors?" cont.*)

Reason No. 2 – Curiosity

Okay, you've closed the door and the cat is left on one part of it. But there's a noise or a smell coming from the other side and your cat can't go over there to investigate, which means that there is a problem. Once again, don't be surprised if the cat will go out of its way to let you know about it.

Reason No. 3 – Clowder Rules

Your cat is part of your family, right? Well, the humans in the household are also honorific members of the cat's clowder (find out more about groups of cats), which means that the cat looks over you. When one or more members of the family are on the other side of a closed door, the cat can't see them, there is a problem. The meowing, scratching, and fidgeting simply means that the cat wants to make sure that everybody is alright.

How Cats Protest Closed Doors

Cats have many ways of letting you know that there is definitely a closed door in your home, but let's go through the most common ones:

- **Meowing** – As soon as the door closes, the cat becomes alarmed and it becomes vocal. They usually go sit in front of the closed door and meow and meow until somebody finally opens it for them.
- **Fidgeting** – They've meowed and meowed, but the door has yet to open, so the cats become restless and they start to fidget. They walk back and forth to the closed door, planning their next steps.
- **Pawing** – For most cats, if meowing and fidgeting prove to be unsuccessful in getting the door to open, the next step is pawing at it until somebody notices them. It looks like the cat is trying to dig a tunnel under the door to get across.
- **Asking for Help** – One way or another, the door must open, so if meowing and pawing haven't worked, then they will look for somebody to help. They will go to a family member, meow and brush up against them, and then go up to the closed door to get them to come and, hopefully, open for them.
- **Scratching** – If their cry for help goes unanswered, then cats have to use their own weapons (their claws). The last stand in the fight with the closed door is scratching because they know that is bound to get everybody's attention, on both parts of the door.

How to Keep that Door Closed in Spite of Your Cat's Protest

Sometimes some doors need to stay closed, even though your cat disagrees with such practices. But what can you do to get a peaceful closing of the door in a house with a cat? Here are a few suggestions

Plan A – Methods that Keep Kitty Focused Elsewhere

- Give your cat as much attention as possible – In some cases, the cat's exacerbated interest with what goes on behind closed doors has a lot to do with the level of attention they are getting. If they aren't getting enough

(*continued on next page*)

("Why Do Cats Hate Closed Doors?" cont.)

time with the family, they might be more prone to protest closed doors because it feels that they are left behind. So show your kitty how much you care, spend time with it, cuddle it, play with it, and it will know that a closed door is not a threat.

- **Make your cat a lounging area next to the window** – For cats that have an issue with the front door being closed, giving them the chance to see what happens behind it is enough to get them to calm down. They will then be able to look out the window and see you as you walk out and they will know where you are.

- **Boxes, Bags, and Toys** – This is more of a general solution, but when cats have a lot of things to play with, they are less stressed and, therefore, less prone to respond to the threats posed by a closed door. So give your cat its favorite things (boxes and bags, as many as you are willing to have around the house). When the cat gets bored with them, you can simply throw them out. Add some toys to the mix and the cat will be too busy playing to care about closed doors.

- **Scratching Posts** – Aside from the last stand in getting your attention, scratching is something that cats really enjoy doing. For some cats, closed doors are simply great scratchers that are just lying around. So, if you want to keep your doors intact, then get your cat a scratcher that it really likes, one that makes the door pale away in comparison.

Plan B – Methods that Keep Kitty Away

If you've tried everything else, but you have yet to find a suitable solution for your cat's protests to the closed doors in your house, then there are some solutions that might keep your kitty away from the door:

- **Anti Chew/Bitter Spray** – If nothing else works, then you can turn to a taste deterrent. Anti-chew or bitter sprays are veterinary-approved, they are safe for cats, but the cats will definitely not like them. Spray the bottom part of the door that you want to keep closed with bitter spray. Then, when the cat paws or scratches the door, the smell, and the taste will urge it to reconsider.

- **Sticky Paws** – Another option is to use Sticky Paws on the bottom part of the door. You will need to use several strips to cover the door, but it is bound to be annoying enough for your cat to get it to stop scratching the door. The bands are not sticky enough to keep the cat there or to harm it in any way, but the feel of their paws sticking to the band, even for a moment, is a sensation that cats do not like and will want to avoid. This is a training aid that is useful for protecting furniture from your cat's paws and it is also useful for doors.

- **Training Mats** – Place training mats in front of the door you want to clear. Cats will avoid stepping on them and, hopefully, that will be enough to keep them from pawing and scratching the door. Keep in mind though that you shouldn't step on these mats barefoot either because it might be unpleasant for you as well.

- **Large Object** – Another way to block the door and keep the cat from scratching at it is placing a large object in front of it, hopefully one that is light enough for you to move easily, but one that the cat can't move.

A Key for Every Door

The cat's protests to each door may have a story of their own for your kitty, but they certainly have one for you as well. Here are the most common situations when we need to make it clear to kitty that some doors have to stay closed: ↗

("Why Do Cats Hate Closed Doors?" cont.)

Keeping the Bedroom Door Closed

This is a common challenge for cat owners. As soon as the bedroom door closes, the scandal breaks out. In fact, there are two sides to this story, depending on which part of the door the cat is:

When the cat is inside the bedroom with you

It usually goes like this...kitty falls asleep next to you in bed and all is calm and cozy. Until about four in the morning, that is, when kitty wakes up and wants to go out. In this case, your best option is to either give in and sleep with your bedroom door open or to leave kitty out of the bedroom for the entire night to make sure you get a good night's rest. Find out more about cats' nighttime habits.

When the cat is outside the bedroom without you

Kitty might not like that it is outside and that there is a door between her and you during the night. Keep in mind that the worst thing you can do is to open the door for kitty in the middle of the night. Why? Because it will understand that making noise is an efficient way to get you to open it. So, try out all the methods we've mentioned above, and stay strong! In the meantime, a pair of earplugs might be useful.

Editor's note — Because this is such a long article, I will print the remainder in the next newsletter.

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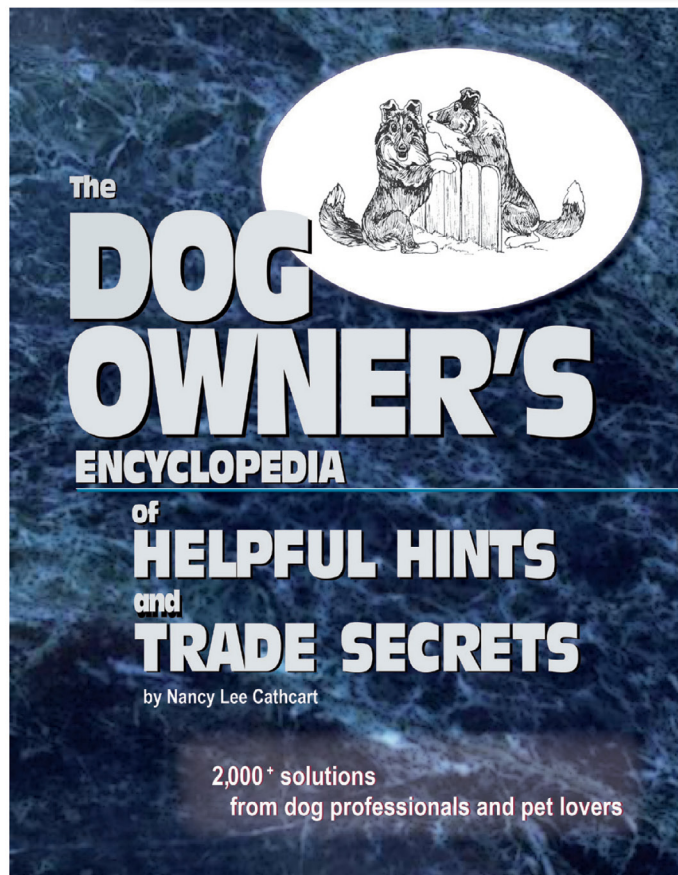
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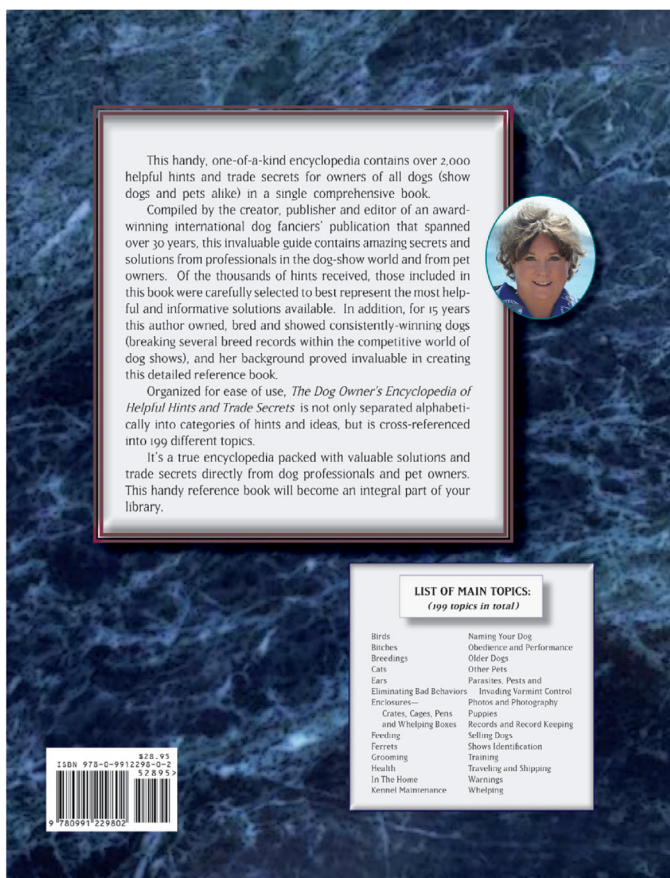
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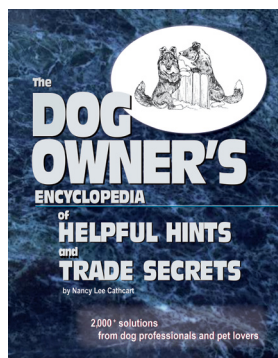
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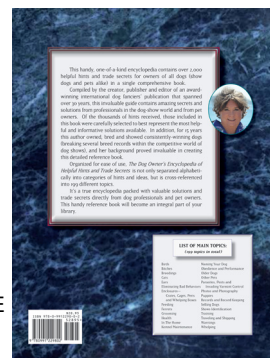
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