

# NATIPETS

JANUARY 2024 | ISSUE 1

FISH ARE GREAT PETS

PET BIRD TIPS

SPIDERS AS PETS

PETS: OVERVIEW, LOVE,  
COSTS AND MORE



# NATIPETS

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## PUBLISHER'S VIEW

Nothing compares to the joy of coming home to a loyal companion. The unconditional love of a pet can do more than keep you company. Pets may also decrease stress, improve heart health, and even help children with their emotional and social skills.

An estimated 68% of U.S. households have a pet. But who benefits from an animal? And which type of pet brings health benefits?

Over the past 10 years, NIH has partnered with the Mars Corporation's WALTHAM Centre for Pet Nutrition to answer questions like these by funding research studies.

Scientists are looking at what the potential physical and mental health benefits are for different animals—from fish to guinea pigs to dogs and cats. Pets also bring new responsibilities. Knowing how to care for and feed an animal is part of owning a pet. NIH/Mars funds studies looking into the effects of human-animal interactions for both the pet and the person.

Remember that animals can feel stressed and fatigued, too. It's important for kids to be able to recognize signs of stress in their pet and know when not to approach. Animal bites can cause serious harm.

At the end of the day, we all love our pets and they love us too. These relationships have been around since man has walked the earth. Most of us even consider our pets to be a part of the family. We care for our pets like we care for our children, and they give us loyalty and love in return. I for one cannot imagine a life without my dog. Until next time.  
Matt Tackett

## Extra Tips to Keep Your Pets

# HAPPY, HEALTHY, & SAFE: While Protecting Your Pocket

*Misty Stevens | PetSuites Cincinnati- Sharonville*

Pet owners typically think of pet care as nutrition, veterinary care, toys, playtime, and of course unconditional love. All too often we forget about daily and professional maintenance of their skin and hair from their adorable face all the way to their happy tails. Unkempt pet hair, salt, and excessive moisture during the winter months can create unhealthy conditions leading to irritation and a possible need for veterinary intervention.

Unless you plan to keep your pet inside 100% of the time, winter brings a need for extra measures. Regardless of breed, paw care should be at the top of that list. Although they make booties, not all people or pets want to deal with the hassle. Salt and unnecessary moisture create a chemical reaction that can burn your pets paw pads. Long hair on feet and pads can also cause slippery situations. Keeping hair trimmed, clean, and shaving pads will help lesson these complications. Make sure to protect your fur baby's feet. If they are not wearing booties, then you should wipe off paw pads after each outside adventure. Salt naturally dries out their pads so be sure to add moisturize to all their pads with a pet safe balm.

The proper grooming routine will vary according to your pets' coat needs.

The cold weather outside and dry heat combo from your home during the winter months can dry out your pets' skin. Adding a conditioner will help bring moisture back to the hair to help keep it healthy. Pets with undercoat should have a de shed service to remove "dead" shedding hair. For long & curly coat haircuts, consider the temperature you maintain in your household. If you keep your home toasty, remember your pets cannot take off extra layers. You can always add a sweater or coat to keep them warm when enjoying winter weather.





If you like to keep it cool, you may want to consider leaving their coat longer to keep them warmer. Long and any curly coats need regular professional care but also need daily brushing and combing in between the professional services. Should you plan to increase the length of your fur baby's coat, they will most likely need to increase personal home and professional grooming services to keep their hair healthy and maintained. You may even want to alternate in closer intervals; a bath service and a full groom service for them.



Whatever hair length you choose, please be mindful pets with undercoat, long, and curly hair coats can mat very easily if not taken care of properly. Pay close attention to the areas that see a lot of friction: neck, behind ears, under chin/throat area, and under arms. If you choose a sweater or coat option it can compress hair and easily mat any area the sweater or coat comes in contact with their hair, if left on for extended periods of time.

What is matting? It is densely tangled clumps of hair. The loose hairs twist and embed into other hair. If the coat is not properly cared for it is easy for this to occur. When matting is left too long it can cause more damage to brush or comb mats out, ultimately leading to your groomer having no choice but to shave your pet's hair. This can leave pets with very short haircuts (usually not what the owner or groomer want to do). Matting can also cause numerous health conditions including itching, irritation, and skin infections. Removing heavy matting from a pet's coat includes risks of nicks, cuts, and abrasions due to warts, moles, and skin folds hidden in the mats and a consequence of the density of the matting. Heavy matting can trap in moisture near the pet's skin allowing fungus or bacteria to grow causing skin irritations that exist prior to grooming. The dematting process can

also cause patchiness and hair loss due to damaged skin and hair follicles. After dematting in any form on any part of the pet blood rushes back to the areas matting existed and can cause other issues like hematomas in the ear area. After grooming a densely matted pet, you should consider a follow up vet visit to help care for exposed or potential conditions.

In conclusion, grooming is absolutely essential for your pets overall health and the upfront regular care cost will save you from surprising unplanned veterinary cost. To prevent complications from improper grooming care and to keep your pet happy, healthy, and safe, you should schedule your pets' regular professional grooming services today. Your groomer can set you and your pet up for success this winter season and for your pets' lifetime skin and coat needs. If you do not own a pet currently but are interested in adding to your family, remember they are a life time commitment and consider all expenses involved before choosing to do so.



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# NEWS BLAST!

*Pet article courtesy of [pet-articles.blogspot.com](http://pet-articles.blogspot.com)*

## Breeding Dogs for Domestic Purposes

The biggest problem that one faces in big cities is maintaining the security of home. Burglary and theft are relevant these days and it's absolutely necessary to make some safety arrangements for their home against such cases. Hence having a puppy at home serves the dual purpose of securing the home against the thieves and having a pet for their home. There are several agencies in the world which rear and supply dogs for the needy people. Even though there are several breeds of dogs which are being reared by the people, bulldogs are favorite for most of the people for their several special qualities which are lacking in other animals. The bulldogs...

## Different Types of Dog Kennel Systems

Are you looking for a quality kennel for your pet that is comfortable, sturdy and low maintenance? Kennels provide shelter to your little companion and is an important addition in a home if you are a dog owner. A dog kennel manufacturer has various options of domestic and commercial kennels that will suit your requirement. The manufacturers concentrate both on the design and the materials used for the kennel to offer a product of value to the customers. The kennel systems should be such that you should not have to worry about repair or replacement for years. There are different types of dog kennels in the market and you can explore the options...

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### Air Travel Tips For Your Dog

Traveling by air with a pet can be a challenge. If you have a dog small enough to fit comfortably in an airline approved carrier that slides under the seat in front of you, it's much easier. If your dog is not a service animal or small enough to travel in-cabin, you're almost better off to drive to the destination. Placing an animal in cargo has a mountain of risks associated with it. There are actual horror stories about the trauma animals have suffered during air travel by cargo. There was...

### Mobility for Your Paralyzed Dog

The case of dogs is not like the humans who feel comfortable even when sitting for long hours. Unlike people who can merely sit in front of the TV or use the computer all day, dogs are naturally active and they love to wander around and explore as their way to enjoy life. That is why when your dog falls ill or worse becomes disabled, you can feel its sadness deeply over its situation. A paralyzed dog is same as a dead one. It can't go around and therefore can't follow whatever provokes his sense of smell. It is prevented from running and playing with you if it wants to. In many ways, your dog ceases to have the life of a dog. Being a...

### Responsible Dog Ownership

With all the companionship and love that our dogs give so freely, it's hard to imagine that some owners just don't take responsibility for their dogs. But it's true. Millions of dogs—healthy dogs—are euthanized every year. Whether through owner neglect or owner ignorance, millions of healthy dogs will endure the same fate this year. So what's a responsible dog owner to do? The best thing you can do, as a dog owner, is to ensure that your dog doesn't become a statistic, and you do that through...



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# THE DOG TRAINER'S LIFE

In a dog's life, the Role of a Certified Dog Trainer Articles the owner is probably the center of his world. But if most dog owners have the passion for their pets, not all of them have the time or knowledge to train their pets. So, when dog training before was regarded as just a small-time specialist's job, the attitude of the time has changed. Being a certified dog trainer is to be considered to be a good career. Dogs certainly need training. More so than most owners know about it.

Dog trainers are often people who do what they love. They have a passion for pets. They usually have to teach the basics of dog and owner bonding and how they are to interact with each other. Dog trainers find it a reward to have an effect, in their job, passing along their experience-tested knowledge to people with the same pet passion as they have

A dog trainer is vital in a dog's life. These people are naturally drawn to animals. While it is often a simple home job, dog training is increasingly regarded as a profession where actual people may profit from certified employment.

Training a dog is essential. Training dogs may not seem like a typical office job, but it appears to be one where someone does what they love. The dog trainer is the ultimate tool in teaching both the dog owner and the pet how to connect

and interact. It is gratifying and daunting to realize that your talents as a trainer may help others who share your interest.

To become a certified dog trainer, you must first love animals. Training dogs takes time, patience, and a willingness to work with animals. To be successful in your trade, you need both knowledge and enthusiasm. Unfortunately, many individuals wait until their dog shows symptoms of aggressiveness before seeing a professional dog trainer. A dog's lifelong training starts the minute the owner takes him home. Beginning with the basics. Basic involves learning dog behavior, psychology, physiology, and how to interact with them. Most dog owners have fundamental training issues during puppy training. A qualified dog trainer can help here. They sometimes give lessons on how to handle a puppy like a kid properly.



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After learning the basics of dog behavior, specific courses to teach a dog using various approaches and strategies starts. These guidelines educate dog owners on how to utilize positive reinforcement to train their pets. The training also leads both the dog and the owner's safety. It's vital to understand how to cope with challenging canines with a history of pet fighting and aggression. After completing the curriculum, the trainer is ready to begin actual training.

The dog's conduct depends on the trainer's handling. A responsible owner ensures that her pet receives appropriate dog obedience training and is properly taught to not to harm themselves or others. Dogs are naturally gentle creatures, but they may become destructive and violent when mistreated and constantly chastised. Remember that animals have emotions and have a life, which is why dog trainers must be extremely cautious.

## ONE MAN'S LOVE STORY

*Anthony Teague*

Jubilee is a 13-year-old Pitbull mix female. She was fostered from Cincinnati Pit Crew at the age of 3. She was an abuse rescue.

Jubilee "JuJu" had two sets of pups early in her life. Her pups story can be found on FACEBOOK UNDER.

After weening her second set of pups off, Cincinnati Pit Crew was made aware of a group of puppies in danger of losing their lives due to their mother being killed before they were capable of feeding on their own.

Juju was introduced to the group of pups. Her maternal instincts took over and she laid before the pups, fed them as if they were her own and treated them as such until they were healthy and adoptable.

I took her in as a foster and found out very quickly that she would be my forever dog.

She is beyond loving and has been an amazing role pup for pit bulls and the love they share.

She also protected my daughter from being bit by an American Bulldog. That is her story. Thank you for listening. Owner of JuJu, Anthony Teague.

*Jubilee, 13-year-old Pitbull Mix*

# PET BIRD TIPS

## Pet Bird Cages and Environment

In general, the larger the bird cage the better. Pet birds need room to exercise their wings and climb. A variety of bird toys that provide enrichment activities give these intelligent animals plenty of things to do. Finches and canaries enjoy flying throughout a cage, so a flight cage is always preferred, especially with multiple birds. A parrot requires toys for chewing, while a finch or canary enjoys a bell or swing.

## Pet Bird Intelligence

Some pet birds (macaws, African Greys, amazons, and others) can mimic speech and sounds they hear. Some species are better at mimicking than others but remember that each individual bird is different. Some soft-billed birds, such as the mynah, are good at mimicry, too.

## Pet Bird General Care

Taking Care Of Your Pet Bird Is Important. Pet birds are different than cats and dogs, but they are not any more difficult to keep healthy. The right pet bird diet, a clean cage, fresh bird food and water, safe bird toys, exercise, and lots of attention are the basics. Pet bird cages should have plenty of space for activity and a grate to separate your pet bird from the substrate.



## Pet Bird Diet and Treats

Birds may eat a wide variety of food items in the wild, foraging to meet their needs. As family friends, pet birds have the same needs and, which you can meet with the premium diets manufactured by Kaytee—Fiesta Max, Forti-Diet Pro Health, exact®, and many others.

## Pet Bird interaction and Socialization

Understanding bird behavior in the wild is very important to understanding their behavior as companions. For instance, parrots are social animals in the wild. They roost, fly, and forage in flocks. Your family is the flock for a pet bird, and it wants to be part of family activities. If your family is in one room and the bird is in its cage in another, the bird may scream to get the flock's attention. Similarly, many species of parrots mate for life. So, when a parrot bonds with one person and is showing offensive behavior toward others, it is simply protecting its "mate."



# FISH ARE GREAT PETS!

Freshwater fish.....saltwater fish.....tropical fish.....there are so many species to choose from when looking for pet fish. I think most people remember winning the ring toss at the local fair and returning home with a plastic bag filled with water and a goldfish. Inevitably your new fish would be flushed down the toilet a few days later.

If you are considering becoming a responsible first-time pet fish owner, we're here to help! The following is a list of the top 6 freshwater and top 6 saltwater fish. They are perfect for first-time fish owners or beginner pet owner. These fish and the necessary supplies can be found at most fish stores in the Los Angeles area.

Generally speaking, all these species are good-natured, striking, and very easy to care for. Good luck with finding your new pet fish!

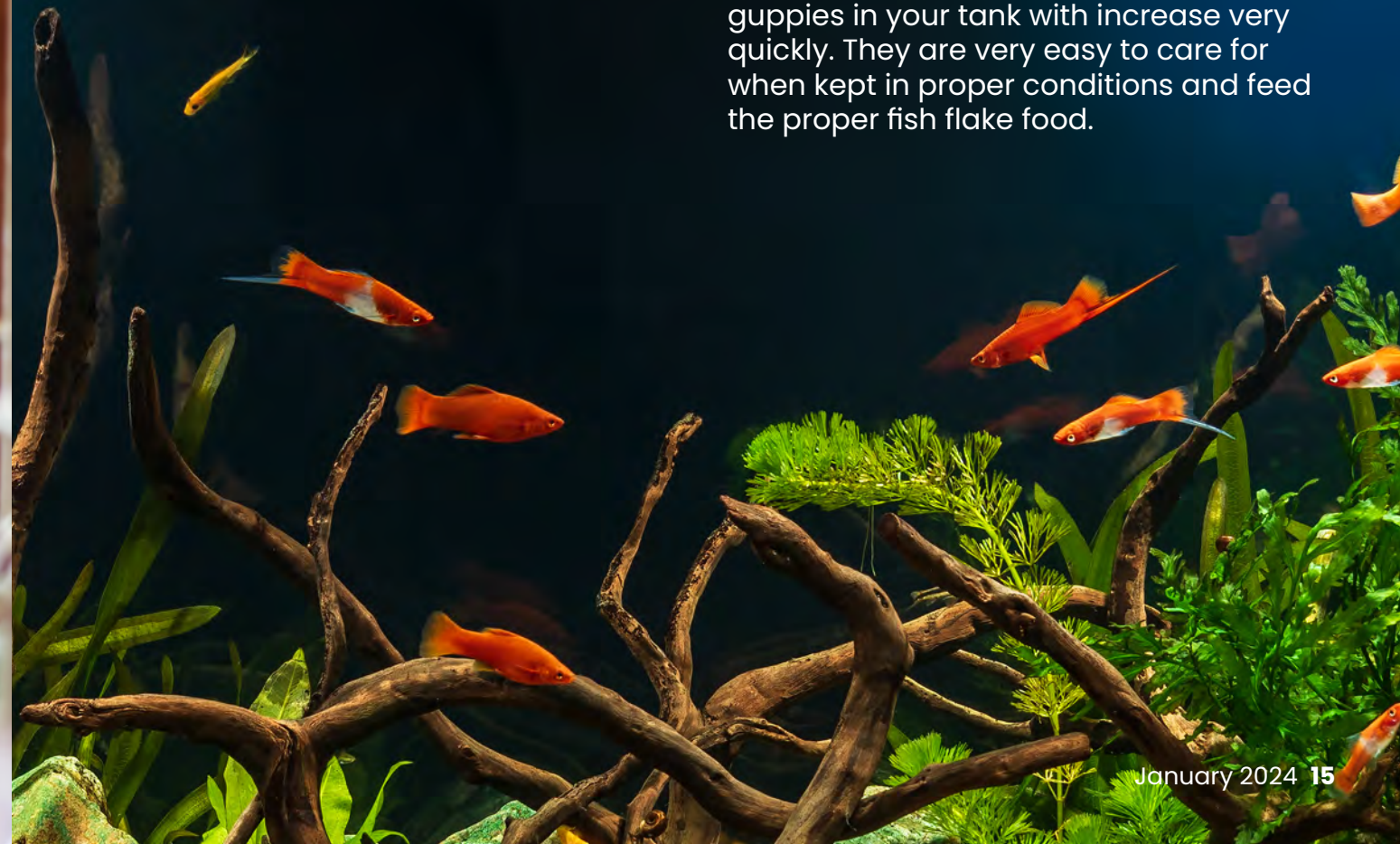
## FRESHWATER FISH

### 1. GOLDFISH

Yes, the goldfish is top on the list. The goldfish come in more shapes, sizes, and colors and when cared for correctly can live a long life. They are able to live in a wide range of conditions and are happy with fish flakes making them very easy to care for.

### 2. GUPPIES

Small and brightly colored, guppies are another favorite for beginner aquariums. Known as prolific breeders the number of guppies in your tank with increase very quickly. They are very easy to care for when kept in proper conditions and feed the proper fish flake food.





### 3. ZEBRA DANIOS

With their zebra patterning, high energy, and fun personality, Danios are another popular fish among new owners. These small fish tend to thrive in small schools or 6 or more and survive very well on fish flake food.

### 4. BUSHYNOSE PLECOS

Besides being easy to care for, the Plecos will help keep your aquarium clean. These fish will clear up leftover or decaying food from the bottom of the tank. They also help clear the sides of any algae. When not sweeping the tank, these fish prefer to hide out. Be sure to add some features at the bottom of the aquarium they can use for cover. They survive well in a wide variety of conditions and will eat almost anything.

### 5. NEON TETRAS

Hardy and inexpensive to care for, Tetras are a popular freshwater species. These small, schooling fish will put on a dazzling light show when swimming together. Their shiny scales will reflect light simultaneously and even change colors under changing light conditions. These little guys thrive in varied tank conditions and eat flake food.

### 6. MOLLIES

On the larger side when compared to other species on this list, mollies are similar to guppies. They survive in a wide range of conditions and reproduce very quickly. Mollies are known for their wide range of colors and varieties and will eat almost any food fed to them.

## SALTWATER FISH

### 1. CLOWNFISH

Clownfish are the stars of the Disney movie "Finding Nemo". With their brilliant orange, white, and black coloration they are easily recognizable. Clownfish are great eaters and do with both flakes and pellets. A hardy, peaceful fish, this saltwater species mate for life and reproduce easily.

### 2. LAWMOWER BLENNY

Much like the Bushynose Plecos in a freshwater tank, the Lawnmower Blenny will help keep your saltwater aquarium clean. The Blenny is a voracious algae eater and will keep your water clear and your tank shiny. The ease of ownership with the Blenny is very low since most of its food is grown in the tank.



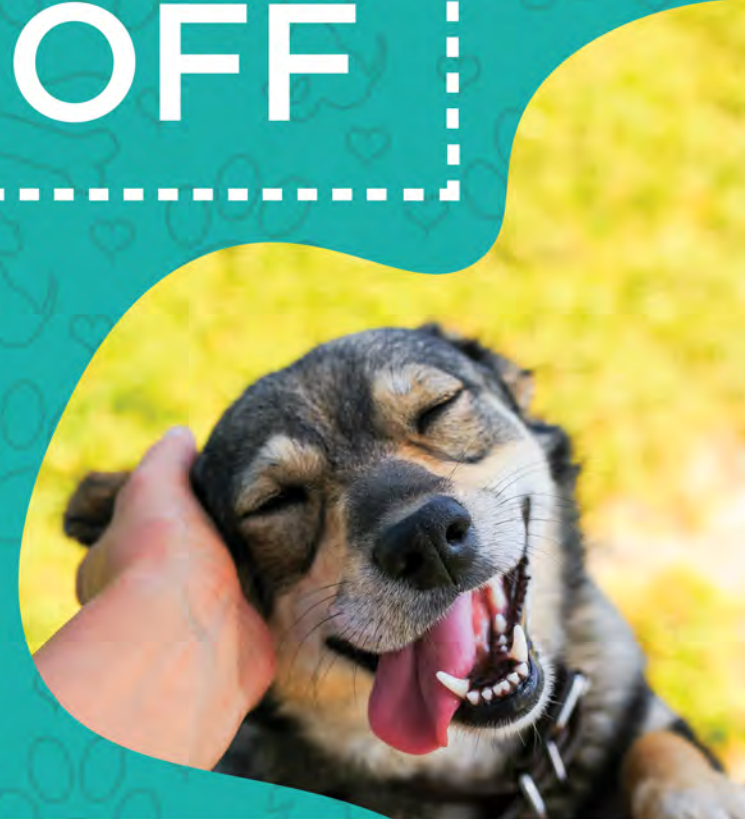
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### 3. BUTTERFLY FISH

The Butterfly Fish is instantly recognizable to most people. They come in over 100 different species that vary greatly in color. After choosing the species that best suits your tank, the Butterfly Fish are easy to care for. Be sure to check the exact requirements for the species you decide. The tank conditions and food type can vary widely between species.

### 4. CHALK BASS

If you've decided on a smaller aquarium than be sure to consider a Chalk Bass. This small and very hardy fish thrives under many different conditions, resists illness, and will eat almost anything. These fish are "beginner" resistant and will thrive very easily.

### 5. WATCHMAN GOBY

The Watchman is one of the better picks for a beginners' aquarium. They tend to be non-picky eaters and will gobble up most anything you find at your local fish store. The Goby is a very peaceful fish with other species. Note, however, they may be aggressive with other Gobys so make sure your tank is large enough to keep them separated.

### 6. PAJAMA CARDINALFISH

If you would like a unique, unusual tropical species for your aquarium, look no further than the Pajama Cardinalfish. With a green/yellow face, large orange eye, black middle, and bright polka dot tail end, this fish will be a conversation piece. Although very easy to care for, the Cardinalfish is very shy and prefers to keep to itself. They also tend to be more active at night.

Whether you are searching for a freshwater fish, a saltwater fish, a tropical one, or a more common one- the variety of different fish to choose from are almost endless. As a beginner or first-time pet owner, consider the fish on this list to start your aquarium. Knowing what to expect will make it easier on you and your new pet. Researching and developing a relationship with a vet that has experience with pet fish is also a good idea. Many fish owners do take their fish to the vet and there are many solutions a vet can offer to keep your fish happy and healthy.

If you would like to learn more or if you would like to use our pet care services reach out to us via email or call us.

# PETS:

## Overview, Love, Costs, and More

*Kira Tackett*

### Man's Best Friend

Pets, those enchanting beings, have insinuated themselves into the very fabric of human affection and existence. Indeed, the definition of "pets" remains a mercurial concept, its contours defined by the unique perspectives of individuals. For some, every living being possesses the potential for pet-hood, while for others, the boundaries of this definition are circumscribed by the benevolent presence of cats and dogs alone. Irrespective of these distinctions, certain animals are kept for their utilitarian roles, be it for hunting, serving individuals with disabilities, or offering solace as emotional companions, unfettered by the expectation of reciprocation.

These relationships, pure in their devotion, serve as a reflection of the

boundless capacity of the human heart. They stand as a parallel to the laws of nature, where alliances and pack affiliations are forged through a tit-for-tat arrangement. In the world of pets, humans discover and express the very best facets of their nature. As we embark on a deeper exploration of this symbiotic rapport between humanity and the animal kingdom, the question naturally arises: Which pet is most fitting for your unique being?

This decision is a matter that hinges upon an individual's character, physical requisites, lifestyle, accommodations, and financial resources. Each species of pet presents distinct demands, some more exacting than others, for the organisms that inhabit our Earth are intricate in their diversity. For instance,



the canine, a creature endowed with emotional intelligence and ceaseless vitality, will necessitate a more substantial investment of attention and commitment than an invertebrate, those spineless wonders such as insects, crustaceans, and arachnids. Each, in their own right, warrants care, albeit in divergent forms. It is paramount to remember that these are living beings, not disposable playthings, and thus, one must prepare meticulously before embarking on this enriching odyssey.

### **Kitty Kitty**

Let us commence our exploration with the venerable *Canis lupus familiaris*, affectionately known as the dog, celebrated as “Man’s best friend.” Earning this distinction was no arbitrary feat, as dogs have faithfully shadowed humanity for over 15,000 years—long before the advent of agriculture. Today, they reign supreme as the most popular choice for companionship, gracing one in three households across the globe. These playful, amicable, and fiercely loyal creatures serve as both affectionate companions and vigilant protectors, possessing an innate intelligence that allows them to assist their human counterparts in diverse ways. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that a dog’s temperament can vary substantially depending on factors such as age, breed, and individual personality. While dogs undoubtedly offer profound rewards, they undeniably constitute “high-maintenance” pets, necessitating a substantial investment of time, resources, attention, space, and finances to ensure their happiness and well-being. They are ideally suited for individuals capable of accommodating

their exuberant energy and commanding a positive, assertive presence—an inclination typically associated with extroverted personalities, though exceptions invariably exist, shaped by the unique attributes of each canine companion. The costs involved in dog ownership encompass initial expenses, including adoption or purchase, spaying/neutering, optional yet recommended microchipping, and the procurement of essential supplies like collars, leashes, food and water bowls, toys, crates, beds, and grooming equipment. Ongoing financial commitments encompass sustenance, veterinary care, additional toys, and the necessary accouterments for maintaining hygiene. It is imperative to maintain financial reserves for potential veterinary emergencies, recognizing the enduring partnership a dog entails.

In the chronicle of domesticated creatures, *Felis catus*, or the cat, emerges as a prominent figure. Cats have been interwoven with humanity’s tapestry for approximately 10,000 to 12,000 years, initially finding their place in the Fertile Crescent as protectors of grain stores, valiantly warding off rodents. This alliance, it could be argued, was mutually beneficial, and some scholars contend that cats, in their own mysterious way, chose to domesticate themselves. Although not as demanding or reliant on constant attention as dogs, cats necessitate meticulous financial planning, adequate living space, and a sincere reservoir of affection. The suitability of a potential feline owner hinges on their personality, with introverted and calm individuals often finding themselves in harmony with these

feline companions. Cats, being creatures of discernment, establish personal boundaries, a fact to bear in mind, particularly if one shares their home with inquisitive children. The financial obligations for cat ownership mirror those of dogs, albeit typically to a lesser extent, encompassing initial outlays for adoption or purchase, spaying/neutering, optional microchipping, and the procurement of essential supplies like food and water bowls, litterboxes, toys, cat food, cat litter, and scratching posts—highly recommended unless one prefers their furniture to serve as a feline amusement park. While recurring expenses for food and litter remain, cats generally consume less than their canine counterparts. It is also prudent to maintain financial reserves for unforeseen veterinary exigencies, safeguarding the health and well-being of your beloved feline.

### **Budgies Fly Baby Fly**

The avian kingdom introduces yet another realm of possibilities, with Budgerigars, or Budgies (*Melopsittacus undulatus*), reigning as the most universally embraced avian companions. These enchanting creatures have been bred in captivity since the 1850s, endearing themselves to enthusiasts through their hardiness and the extraordinary ability to mimic human speech. Fueled by their inherent flocking instincts, Budgies view their human custodians as integral members of their social group. Thus, a prospective owner must dedicate ample time to their feathered companions. Ensuring that someone is consistently present or arranging for the companionship of another bird of the same species

is imperative to stave off depression and anxiety in these birds. Moreover, be prepared for their vocal proclivities, as Budgies are known for their talkativeness and can create a cacophonous household. These petite parrots have a lifespan of 7-10 years or more, requiring a sustained financial commitment. However, the costs of keeping Budgies as pets are relatively affordable in comparison to some other avian species. Expenses include securing an appropriately sized cage, food, cage accessories, periodic veterinary visits, bedding, cleaning supplies, and appropriate lighting. The costs may fluctuate, but typically involve initial outlays for the cage, monthly food expenses, and occasional vet consultations. Additionally, provision must be made for initial cage accessories, cleaning supplies, and educational resources. Factor in long-term commitment and potential replacement costs for items in your budget.

### **Living Dinosaurs**

Delving into the realm of reptiles, we encounter a subject of fervent debate among zoologists: the potential



classification of birds as reptiles. In this context, we refer to reptiles as a distinct category, recognizing that their care demands are significantly different from those of Budgies. Ownership of most reptiles comes with a considerable financial burden, separate from the cost of acquiring the reptile itself. Much of these expenses are upfront, including the purchase or adoption, habitat setup, substrate, optional vegetation, heat lamps, UVB lamps, thermostats, food dishes, basking surfaces, and decor items that provide hiding places. The cost of enclosures varies widely; a basic terrarium for a small reptile can range from \$50 to \$100, while custom-built enclosures can command several hundred to thousands of dollars. Recurring costs include their diet, which consists primarily of vegetables, fruits, and insects, though certain reptiles, such as snakes or monitors, may require frozen mice. Reptiles often necessitate supplementary heating and lighting, which can impact your energy bills. Researching the specific requirements of your chosen reptile species is paramount, as these demands can vary significantly. Legal considerations and prudent budgeting for setup, ongoing care, and unforeseen emergencies are also crucial aspects of reptile ownership.

### **Insects**

Lastly, we turn our gaze to the diminutive denizens of the invertebrate realm: insects, arachnids, myriapods, gastropods, and crustaceans, each with their unique allure. The prospect of caring for creatures so profoundly distinct from us in terms of biology and behavior can instill a profound respect for the natural world, offering a broader perspective on life itself. Take, for example, the arachnophobe who seeks

to conquer their fear through the care of a jumping spider. Such encounters enable us to view these creatures in a new light, appreciating their captivating traits, including their intelligence and remarkable behaviors. Keeping invertebrates as pets represents a viable choice for individuals constrained by limited living space or budgetary considerations, for these creatures are characterized by their low-maintenance nature, small size, and unobtrusive demeanor. To care for invertebrates, it is essential to create a suitable environment tailored to the specific needs of the chosen species. This entails providing an appropriate enclosure, selecting the right substrate, arranging for suitable heating and lighting, and incorporating habitat enrichment items. Additionally, you must ensure the availability of adequate food and water sources, as well as the provision of feeding and watering implements. Dedicating time to researching the unique care requirements of your selected invertebrate is of paramount importance, as is establishing a relationship with a veterinarian equipped to address potential health concerns. Legal considerations, budgeting for setup, ongoing maintenance, and unanticipated situations should also be taken into account. Lastly, investing time in observing and interacting with your invertebrate companions can be a rewarding endeavor, as they exhibit fascinating behaviors and characteristics. Given that different invertebrates boast unique care requirements, meticulous research is indispensable, tailoring your setup to the particular species you wish to nurture. Invertebrates emerge as captivating and low-maintenance companions, granted the appropriate environment and care.



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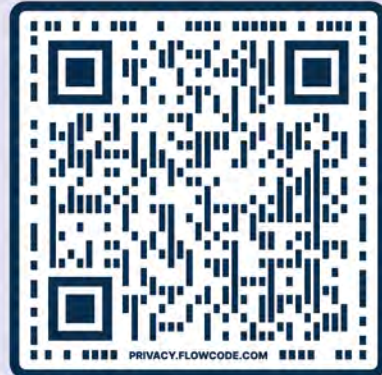
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# Spiders as pets? **SURE!!!!!!**

Spiders are fascinating creatures to watch, but before purchasing one for yourself, it is best to do your homework so you will be able to properly determine whether spider ownership is both a good fit for you and the other members of your household. These fascinating creatures are special, and while they are not excessively demanding in their care, you should have the same amount of dedication to caring for them as for any other pet.

## Advantages of Owning a Pet Spider

A lot of owners get pets on impulse, and as soon as the novelty wears off they tire of caring for them. This happens frequently with spiders. Here are some of the advantages of choosing a spider for a pet:

- Spiders are quiet and clean.
- Spiders can live quite comfortably in a small terrarium, taking up very little space.
- Pet spiders are fascinating to observe.
- Spiders are inexpensive to maintain.
- A spider requires little to no socialization, so it won't be lonely if you only own one.

## Possible Disadvantages of Spiders as Pets

Despite their convenience and simplicity, the following may need to be considered before owning a spider:

- Nearly all spiders are poisonous to some degree. Before choosing a spider for a pet, you must consider that some spiders have more potent venom than others. There are some people who are allergic to spider venom (even very weak potency) just as some people would be allergic to a bee sting.
- Tarantulas have more than one mode of protection. In addition to mildly poisonous venom, they can flick their abdominal hairs if they feel threatened.
- Many spiders are natural escape artists and need a properly sealed environment in order to protect themselves and your home.
- Most spiders, even in ideal conditions, don't live very long. Tarantulas, may be the only exception to this rule; sometimes living over 20 years with proper care.



- Most spiders do not enjoy handling. Dropping a tarantula can cause its abdomen to burst, which usually results in death.
- Spiders do not react well to other household pets.
- Some states prohibit the purchase or possession of spiders.

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### Selecting the Right Pet Spider for You

If you're in the beginning stages with a spider, it's best to select a species that's neither fragile nor harmful. The best beginner spider would be a tarantula such as the Chilean rose, Mexican Redleg, or Costa Rican Zebra. These species aren't terribly venomous and are pretty docile when compared with some other tarantulas (their venom is comparable to bee venom). Remember that if you have kids, many insect pets belong to the "look but don't touch" category, mainly because they may be too delicate for constant handling beyond their main caregiver.

### Things to Remember Before Buying a Pet Spider

Consult local, county and state government organizations with regards to legality. Not all locales allow the keeping of spiders, venomous or not, so it is a good idea to research this before making a purchase.

Find out about the treatment (housing, environment, diet) required for the pet you are considering. While many pet spiders are inexpensive to own, offering the suitable surroundings may be tricky for some species, especially for the greater exotic tarantulas. In most cases, you would like to simulate their natural environment as closely as possible. Find out what is required for food and take into account if you will be able to offer the proper diet.

Check the life expectancy of the species you have chosen. A lot of spiders have fairly short life-spans, but some tarantulas can live for 20-30 years (and females are considerably hardier than males).

Learn the proper method of handling your spider. While this is an obvious need for venomous animals, it is just as crucial for non-venomous arachnids as well. They can suffer critical or fatal wounds by incorrect handling.

Find out, from a reputable source, exactly which species are venomous; even a mildly venomous tarantula may cause a lot of pain. Also, tarantulas have special fine hairs on their abdomen, which they expel if threatened; these could be incredibly irritating and dangerous if they get in your eyes. If you're getting a tarantula, make sure you find out not only how best to avoid bites, but also how to deal with bites should they occur.

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# THE ETHICS of Veterinary Medicine



Veterinarians constantly face ethically challenging situations in their jobs. They often have to make difficult moral judgments about how to treat an animal, and the stakes of their decisions may be life-or-death for their patients. Because of this, the European Union has required all veterinary schools' curricula to include ethics courses since 2005. However, it's uncertain whether having taken an ethics course causes veterinarians to engage in more thoughtful ethical reasoning about the dilemmas they face.

Researchers asked students at a veterinary school in Germany to answer a series of questions that tested their moral judgments. Of the 86 students who completed the questionnaire, 61 reported having previously taken an ethics course. They each wrote down their opinions in response to ethically challenging scenarios, such as a farmer who does not want a veterinarian to attend to his sick cows and a mother who refuses to pay for her daughter's guinea pig's life-saving treatment.

The researchers could not identify any significant quantitative differences in judgments or viewpoints between the responses of students who had taken an ethics course and those who had not. Instead, they found that responses varied widely across both groups. Most students seemed to grapple with the conflict

between humans' economic interests and animals' welfare. In those cases, students often attempted to persuade the animal's guardian that it was in their financial interest to save the animal.

A qualitative analysis revealed some differences. When asked to identify the main "stakeholders" in each scenario, students often named the veterinarian and the human client as the major players with competing interests, rather than the animal whose life was in peril. Interestingly, in the scenario about the guinea pig, a larger percentage of students who had taken an ethics class (37%) chose to euthanize the animal than students who hadn't (15%).

Students who had taken an ethics class were also more likely to ask for additional information. They typically presented a wider range of both causes of and solutions to the problems at hand. This may suggest that the ethics courses taught students to identify more considerations involved in animal welfare dilemmas and to assess the competing interests in those dilemmas more critically.

It's important to note that this study had a limited sample size and was restricted

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to a single veterinary school in Germany. It's also true that many other external factors, such as culture and upbringing, could influence students' ethical views more than an ethics course does. However, this study helps to provide foundational knowledge about the impact of veterinary ethics classes. While they may not change students' opinions, it appears they may improve the quality of their moral reasoning. While the study's findings are preliminary, repeat studies in other institutions or countries might yield different results, especially considering animal ethics courses are not all the same.



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