



Benefits of Owning a Cat

- Owning a cat can reduce your risk of heart attack by 30 percent. A recent study by researchers at the University of Minnesota found that feline-less people were 30 to 40 percent more likely to die of cardiovascular disease than those with cats.
- Cats owners have been found to have lower anxiety, blood and cholesterol levels than individuals that do not have a cat as well as less yearly doctor visits.
- Children who are in a home with cats tend to, on average, miss nine days less of school a year than children who do not live with cats. This is primarily because the immune function in a cat owner tends to be more stable, making them better able to fend off illness. Children who own cats also show more empathy towards others and are willing to help others. Cats teach children about body language and other non-verbal cues as well. Lastly, cat-owning children are more likely to be involved in sports, hobbies, clubs, and other social activities as well as even having a higher IQ.



- A UK study of 500 cat owners aged over 55 years old revealed:
 - 82% found that their cat helped them overcome feelings of stress
 - 62% said cat ownership helped overcome feelings of loneliness
 - 75% sometimes preferred to share their feelings with their cat rather than a partner or friend.

The same survey also looked at 100 cat owners aged 13 years and under:

- 80% said their cat helped them get along better with family and friends
- 81% said they would rather chat to their cat about their feelings, than to their parents or a friend
- 87% of children regard their cat as a 'close friend'.

Another study surveyed 100 people aged 20 - 40 years old and showed:

- Nearly half of respondents enjoyed a better night's sleep with their cat on the bed than they did with their partner in the bed
- 60% said they could deal with their cat's bad breath but not their partner's
- 55% would tolerate their cat taking most of the bed covers at night but not their partner doing that.



Sources include: [Dallas Morning News](#), [Ezinearticles.com](#) and [Pet Health Council](#)





Adoption Success Tip Sheet

- *Will I be willing to exercise the pet regularly?* All dogs need regular exercise, but puppies, large breed and active dogs need exercise daily to ensure good behavior and health. Walks, visits to the dog park and fetch sessions are good ways to ensure a happy, healthy dog. Cats need stimulation, such as with toys, furry mice or climbing structures, to keep them fit and happy.



- *Am I In It for the Long Haul?* Many pets can live 15 years or more. During this time, you may move, change jobs or experience other life changes. In addition, your pet may have medical or behavior issues arise. Are you willing to commit to your new pet and ensure he or she stays with your family through all of it?

Preparing Your Home



Dogs and cats need a cozy place to sleep, food and water bowls, treats, toys and a collar, among other things. For dogs, you'll need a leash. Consider a crate as well. Crate training is helpful for housebreaking puppies or for dogs being introduced into a new environment. Having the right supplies on hand reduces stress for everyone!

Selecting a Veterinarian

All pets need regular medical care and should be vaccinated annually. Ask friends and family with pets for a recommendation or look for clinics accredited by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA).

Have Identification on Your Pet at All Times

Proper identification will help ensure your pet doesn't become part of the 85 percent of lost animals who never find their way home. Have your pet microchipped, and attach a rabies tag and ID tag with your phone number on your pet's collar. Be sure to register and update your pet's microchip to realize its benefits.



Behavior Issues

Be realistic. Most pets need some training, whether by you or a professional, to help them become a well-adjusted pet. Use positive reinforcement vs. punishment. Realize that most pets don't misbehave because they're bad or trying to displease you—they may be acting out to get your attention, because they're not exercised/stimulated enough, because they're bored or stressed, or because they don't know what you want them to do. Be patient, consult training resources or contact a reputable trainer. You may also want to consult with a veterinarian to rule out medical causes.

Do you need more information? Contact Orange County Animal Services. We're here to help.

