



FOR THE LOVE
OF
PETS



A PERFECTLY CRAFTED GUIDE AIMED FOR PET LOVERS

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Introductory

Most individuals have an idea just what type of pet they want; however, the maintenance of a pet can cause some concern.

Knowing how to choose the correct pet for you may be easy. You may have had several pets as a child and know you need a companion for your own home or you may have always wanted a pet but been told you could not have one. Whatever the case you may need to take into consideration some key points to pet care when deciding what pet is right for you.

First some pets take more care than others. Dogs are very needy animals. They are very sensitive towards their owners. I am sure most of you have heard of dogs tearing up a house when left alone all day. Dogs can get bored even when they have other dog companions and toys. They need the human interaction. Most dog owners take their dogs out for a walk before work and after work for the exercise and play time.

Other owners who work outside will often let their dogs come to work with them to keep them out of trouble. Cats on the other hand can amuse themselves and as long as you put your valuables on a shelf, they cannot reach and keep a clean house they will sleep, look out windows, and play with toys while you are away. Fish are another type of pet that is typically low maintenance except for cleaning the fish tank.

Pet care is very important when you own a pet. They need attention from their owners, positive reinforcement, training, and love. Fish are usually excluded from this statement, as they just need food, proper tank maintenance, and a few plants to sustain life, however the point is proper pet care is required when you own any pet. The decision will be yours to make in choosing what the right pet is for you. Above I mentioned three types of pets and little about their care, now I am going to look at it a little more.

While dogs are high maintenance and require the most training they are also one of the best pets to own. They can alert you to danger, alert you to someone at the door, and give unconditional love back. A dog only asks in return for proper care and a great deal of attention. If you cannot be home all the time, you will want to make sure the dog has a roof over their heads

in case of inclement weather, and a huge yard to play in. Some dogs can jump fences so it may be best to have a dog run in the yard so they can move about, but not escape.

Cats on the other hand can be high or low maintenance depending on breed as well as personality. Some cats require hours of people attention while others shirk attention. Some cats belong to a one pet household. They do not like to share their owner's affections and will become upset if not mean towards the infiltrator.

Others need the playmate's attention to live happily. It will be hard to determine just which type of cat you own when you first buy them as kittens as their personalities are just developing.

Pet care is the most important factor when you are deciding which pet is right for you and your home. You will want to consider all the pet care needs of the animals you are looking at as well as the breed you are looking at to determine if they will have a happy place in your home.

Chapter 1: Getting Your Pet Through An Animal Rescue Group

Animal rescue organizations or groups offer you a great place to get your next family pet.

These groups are all different, but they do have common goals. These groups work hard to locate a permanent loving home for unwanted or misplaced cats and dogs. Many of these rescue groups rely on volunteers and donations to care for these pets while they are between homes.

When you begin looking for a rescue group to work with, you will find that most of these groups do rely on their hard-working volunteers and support from the local community to operate. You will also find a wide variety of animals available through these rescue groups.

Many of these groups handle all types of animals and you will find kittens, puppies, and even older pets available for adoption. You might be surprised to learn that some groups even offer exotic pets such as reptiles, potbellied pigs and even guinea pigs.

As you begin looking at pets available through rescue groups, keep in mind some of these animals have had very hard lives. You may find a dog that was abused by its owner. You may find a female cat that has just given birth.

Their owners have relinquished many of the animals offered by rescue groups because they are moving or can no longer care for them. In addition, some of these groups take animals that live in kill shelters or as strays living on the streets. Some programs also offer spay and neuter release program for feral cats.

Rescue groups do a good job of screening animals before adopting them out to new homes. They also screen potential pet owners. IF you find a pet offered through a pet rescue group, you will be asked to sign a contract saying that you agree to care for the pet long term. You will also be asked several questions about your home, your children and other pets you may have. This is not to be nosey—it is simply to help match an owner with the

right pet. If the animal suffers from a medical condition, such as diabetes, the new owners know this up front before adopting. Having the animal's health history at the time of adoption helps the animal find a permanent home.

You can gain a lot of personal satisfaction by adopting your next pet through an animal rescue organization. You know you have done something to help and your new pet will show its appreciation. If you are interested in adopting through one of the many rescue organization, it is easy to find one in your area.

Your vet can give you the contact information for organizations near you. Most of the time, these pets are kept in private homes (foster homes) until they are adopted. This gives the animal time to be socialized with other pets, children and time to get used to living in a home. Sometimes, animal rescue groups will bring their animals that need homes to pet stores or other locations for interested people to see and meet the animals on certain weekends.

When you choose a pet in a rescue program, be prepared to go through an interview and application process. The organization wants to know these pets will be well cared for the long term. You will probably be asked about other pets you may have, the age of your children, the size of your yard and your thoughts on a cat with claws if you are looking at a cat.

This is to help match the pet with the right owner. Adoption fees vary by each organization, but you can expect to pay \$100-\$200 for a rescued animal. These groups do not make a profit. These fees cover the cost of the animal while it was in the care of the organization. This adoption fee usually covers vaccinations, medical exams, spaying, and neutering.

Getting your next pet through an animal rescue organization is a responsible way to get your next family member. You can also find many volunteer opportunities through these organizations.

Chapter 2: Picking The Right Food For Your Pet

Pets are wonderful creatures to share our lives with, and they need just as much care as humans.

All pets need to be fed properly, though we always have the question of what that might be. There are individuals who give their pet's human food, while others strictly give pet food. We will concentrate on dogs, cats, and rabbits for proper feeding.

Rabbits

How many times have you heard that rabbits like their vegetables? This is true. Most rabbits need a steady diet of rabbit food that includes lettuce and carrots. Most of the time we raise our rabbits on pellets, however, this may not be fibrous enough and can cause obesity. A steady diet of hay, vegetables, and pellets will lead to a healthy rabbit.

Dogs

Is it wise to feed your dog human food? Most dogs are related to the wolf family a very carnivorous bunch, which means they need to have meat in their diet. This does not mean human food is the correct food for them. It is best to find a dog food product where the first ingredient is meat. Make sure it is real meat and not some processed substitute.

Feeding your dog human food is a bad idea because it can be too greasy for them and block their arteries. Dogs have very sensitive digestive tracks so they are susceptible to diarrhea and upset stomachs if you change their food. It is best to find a dog food you prefer and that is healthy for them. You also want to keep them on the same food.

Changing food can cause problems. If you feel you need to change food, you should slowly integrate the new food with the old until you have fully replaced the old. This should take two weeks or a little more. Dogs when full grown should be fed once a day at the same time.

Cats

Cats are great hunters if you let them explore the outdoor world. They will often find mice, birds, and other animals to gain protein. Like a dog, your cat needs a consistent diet. You should find a cat food that has the proper amounts of protein. Cats can also have a very sensitive digestive system. Finding the right food may be difficult and take a few tries. If they have a smelly litter box, you will need to change their food.

This is a sure sign they are not receiving a proper diet. When you change their food, you will want to integrate it slowly over two weeks. Cats also need the vitamins from milk, though our processed milk can be too rich for them, they do sell milk for cats in the pet stores. Another idea is occasionally giving them a small piece of cheese to help with their dietary needs, however you should try and find pet food that fits all of their needs.

Grass is also available for indoor cats and may be a needed to get rid of hairballs. Cats eat grass when they have an upset stomach. The grass will allow the cats to rid themselves of the problem and can help them cough up hairballs.

Picking the right food for your pet will often mean not feeding them human food, but checking the ingredients of pet food found in the stores. You want to keep you pet just as healthy as you would want to keep yourself.

Proper nutrition for any animal is important to having your pet around for many years. Some types of pets are more susceptible to disease, like dogs with heart problems, but they can be monitored through proper care.

Chapter 3: The Advantages Of The Microchip For Your Pets

Every pet owner wants to keep his or her beloved cat or dog as safe as possible. You do everything you can do make sure your pet is well cared for and healthy.

If you have an indoor pet, you may not think that keeping identification tags is important, but it is. What if your fuzzy feline accidentally slips out of the door at night and you search to no avail? What do you do, especially if your dog or cat has no identification? Placing a collar with an identification tag is important, but collars sometimes become lost.

When you consider the fact that many animal shelters only keep dogs and cats for seven days, you want to make sure that your pet is properly identified. That is where the microchip comes in handy. The microchip is the newest way to identify lost pets and helps ensure that your lost pooch or feline finds his or her way back home.

The technology of the microchip has become so popular that most animal clinics and animal shelters have the ability to scan a cat or dog for microchip identification. If you opt for the microchip, you should know that it is a painless procedure for your pet.

Your vet will insert a tiny microchip about the size of a grain of rice directly under your pet's skin using a hypodermic needle. The microchip is usually placed behind the neck. The microchip contains special digital number that has been entered on a national microchip database. That information will give the person your contact information.

When your pet is lost, a veterinarian or animal shelter can use a special scanner to retrieve the microchip information. It is that easy.

Pet owners love the idea of the microchip because it is permanent. You cannot remove the microchip and unlike a collar or tags, it cannot be lost or destroyed. This is one of the best features of pet microchip, especially for cats. If you place a collar on a cat, more than likely it will be a breakaway collar. If your cat climbs a tree, or is caught on something, the collar breaks

off. If your cat does not have a microchip, it will be very difficult to identify your cat if it is found.

There are a few important things to remember about pet microchips. First, if your pet gets lost, you should never just sit back and wait for a call, even if your pet has a microchip. Not all veterinarians and shelters are equipped with this technology.

You need to take the time to call around and place "lost pet" flyers around your neighborhood. In addition, you need to make sure you take the time to update your contact information should you move. It does little to no good to have your pet implanted with the microchip if the information on the national database is incorrect. Your veterinarian can give you information on how to update this information.

It is important to get your pet implanted with the microchip at a young age. Puppies can have the microchip at age six weeks. Even small breeds of dogs can handle this procedure. Kittens can also undergo this procedure at six weeks.

The insertion of the microchip is not painful and feels like a regular vaccination shot. You can have your pet implanted with the microchip at your veterinarian office and can expect to pay between \$30 and \$50 for this service.

Chapter 4: The Importance of Pet Vaccinations

When you were a child you had to have vaccinations at certain points in your life such as measles, tetanus, and other shots.

This is important for your pets as well. We will specifically look at dog vaccinations, as they are a very common pet to have. Keep in mind during some of these shots are required for cats as well.

Dogs need to have vaccinations to guard against disease. When your dog is a puppy they will need a distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parvovirus, parainfluenza, and corona combination between six to eight, nine to eleven, twelve to fourteen, and sixteen to seventeen weeks. They will also need these shots again every twelve months. The next vaccination is a bordetella administered at fourteen weeks and every six months. Rabies must be given at sixteen weeks and again every twelve to thirty- six months.

Vaccinations protect your dog and other pets from human diseases as well as other problems that could arise. Make sure you visit your pet on a regular schedule. A few more vaccinations are the giardia at fourteen and seventeen weeks, with a yearly dose. Lyme is another type administered at fourteen and seventeen weeks as well as yearly.

Occasionally state regulations will require a different administering chart. It is best to speak with your vet to gain the proper knowledge for your breed of dog as well as the correct vaccinations. Dogs are "man's best friend" and thus it is important to give proper care that includes treatments.

Other care besides vaccinations can be proper baths, toenail clipping, and feeding your dog properly. Most health problems arise in a dog that is either genetically susceptible or environmentally exposed to human food. Human food because of its greasy qualities can block a dog's artery. So proper nutrition is often found in dog food or cooking meals for your pet per vet guidelines if your dog has health issues.

Dogs also require a lot of attention and exercise. Breeds such as the Huskies or golden retrievers require special care. Huskies are breed as working dogs.

They need to have a lot of exercise as well as play time with their owners. Golden retrievers are social animals, will feel lonely, and rejected if left alone for too long. Other breeds though social may not react in the same manners of the latter two. Other breeds can be content with a large yard and runner as long as they can play and eat.

Part of owning a pet, especially a dog is to provide it with love and attention just like you need. Proper care is very important on a day-to-day basis like having a routine feeding time or visiting the vet for the proper vaccinations. Vaccinations can determine the longevity of your dog just like a proper diet and exercise. While your vet has spent a lot of time, going to school for the proper care of animals it is always a great idea to be knowledgeable about your pet's care.

Vaccinations when not administered properly can harm the animal. I would stay away from ordering medications and vaccinations online if you are not familiar with the products and how to give them to your dog, this may cause some medical problems. Any pet deserves the care we would give ourselves and with today's world, we are finding better ways to make going to a vet easier.

Chapter 5: Teaching Kids And Pets To Co-Exist Peacefully

It is possible for children and pets to coexist in the same household, peacefully.

Many people mistakenly think that as soon as they start having children that their pet needs to head to the local shelter. They fear that the cat or dog will not get along with the new child and it will result in biting or scratching. This is not always the case and if you take the time to introduce your pets to your children properly, your kids and pets can live in harmony.

One of the biggest concerns that new parents have when it comes to pets in the home is how it will react to a baby. Many of the old wife's tales such as cats sucking the breath out of babies simply are not true. In fact, many cats and dogs readily accept a new child into the home and become fiercely loyal and protective over the baby.

When you bring your baby home from the hospital, you should introduce your pet to your new baby. Of course, these introductions need supervision. Allow your cat or dog time to sniff your child at his or her own pace. Make the introduction pleasant for your cat or dog. In most cases, your cat or dog will not give your baby a second thought. Allow your pet to adjust to the new situation on his or her own terms. When a baby comes to the house, it is an adjustment for everybody.

The other thing that you might want to consider doing when you bring a baby into the home is to make sure that your cat or dog is properly groomed. This includes trimming your dog or cat nails. Your dog may want to put a paw on your baby.

If his or her nails are long and sharp, your dog may accidentally scratch your infant. While you can never eliminate pet hair from your home, if your dog or cat clipped and brushed it will certainly help your home stay a little cleaner. Many new parents also worry about allergies. The fact is, many studies have shown that children who are exposed to pets from a very young age, actually have less pet allergies than children who are not exposed to pets.

Another good idea is to make sure that your pets do not have access to your baby's room during naptime or at night without supervision. While your pet probably means no harm to your child, pets are naturally curious. A cat may jump into your infant crib, or in large dogs could easily knock a bassinet or cradle over.

You should always supervise your pet when it is around your new baby at all times. Most of all, you should try to make sure that you are still spending quality time with your pet when possible. This especially pertains to dogs, which are used to playing in the backyard and going for walks.

As your child grows, you need to begin teaching your child proper pet etiquette. If your dog or cat has learned to respect your child, then your child also needs to learn to respect your pet. Teach your child from a young age that they should never pull or yank a cat or dog's tail or ears. Your child can learn proper pet etiquette even at a very young age.

You will also want to teach your child to respect your pet's space. This includes making sure that your child understands that he or she should never wake a sleeping pet. This could cause your pet to become startled and could result in biting or scratching.

In addition, you will want to make sure that your child understands to stay out of your pet's food, water and litter box. Your child will be naturally curious, so it is always best to give your pet some private space away from your child.

There are many things you can do to make sure that children and pets coexist peacefully. Your children and pets need to learn to respect each other from the very beginning. There is no reason to get rid of your cat or dog just because you have a child in the home.

Chapter 6: Keeping Your Pet Safe In The Warm Weather Months

The hot summer months can pose a real threat to pets. Cats and dogs simply cannot tolerate extreme temperatures.

As a responsible pet owner, you need to make sure that your pet is safe during these warm weather months. Here are some tips to help you and your pet.

Never leave an animal in a car: All pet owners should know the dangers of leaving any pet in a hot car, even if it is just for a few minutes. This especially applies to dog owners. Dogs love riding in the car and it is very tempting to let your dog ride to the grocery store with you. However, pet owners should never leave cats or dogs inside a car during hot weather.

Even with the windows open, a car parked in the hot sun can reach sweltering temperatures. Pets left in hot cars can die within minutes or can suffer from severe dehydration. The best rule of thumb is the leave your pet at home in the cool air conditioner during the hot weather. You should also know that if you are a dog owner that allowing your dog a ride the bed of a truck could be very dangerous for a dog at any time of the year.

One jolt can send your dog flying out of the bed of the truck, resulting in injury or worse. Even putting your dog unsupervised in the bed of a truck in a public place can be a recipe for disaster. Be extra careful with your pet during traveling. If you must travel with your dog or cat, secure your pet in the car and leave the air conditioning on at all times. Let your pets take frequent breaks on long trips and give them a chance to get a drink of water.

Be Careful Walking the Dog: There are many areas where the temperatures soar in the warm months. In places where the temperatures reach an all-time high, it is a good idea to walk your dog either in the morning or in the evening when temperatures are lower. During the summer, temperatures will be at the highest during midday. You should refrain from walking your dog during this time. Not only will you and your dog become hot and dehydrated, the hot concrete can burn your dog's

sensitive paws. When you do walk during hot weather, take along water for your dog and stop frequently to let your dog drink. Your dog will thank you for this.

Practice Proper Pet Grooming: It is always a good idea to keep your pet properly groomed, but it is especially important during the summer months. If your dog has very long fur, it is like wearing a fur coat in 95-degree weather. It is not comfortable to your pet. Also, keep an eye out for pets that have much of their fur trimmed off, such as poodles. Longhaired dogs can quickly overheat in the high temperatures.

Poodles and other breeds with short cuts can get sunburned. Sunscreen does not protect dogs. With long haired dogs, regular brushing also helps remove the winter undercoat and can help your dog better regulate body temperatures during hot weather. Regular clipping of long hair can also help keep your dog cool. Even longhaired cats can benefit from a summer clipping. Longhaired cats are easily overheated, even if they do stay indoors.

Watch for Insects: Insects can be bothersome to your pet during the warm, summer months. Spring and summer are when fleas and ticks are the highest. Mosquitoes are also out during this time of year. It is always a good idea to make sure your dog and cat are getting their monthly flea and tick preventative. Your dog also needs to stay current on heartworm preventative, as mosquito bites can cause heartworms. Also, keep a first aid kit on hand for bee or wasp stings.

Outdoor safety: Summer is often when people spend a lot of times outdoors. Whether it is working in the yard, visiting the lake or swimming in the pool, you need to take extra caution when your pets are with you outside. If you mow your yard or put chemicals on the grass, be sure your pets are indoors and away from the dangers.

Also, if your dog enjoys the water, keep a close eye on your pet. Most pets can swim instinctively, but it is always a good idea to watch. If you enjoy taking your dog out boating, you can buy life preserver vests for your dog to wear. You can never be too safe when it comes to your beloved furry friend.

Chapter 7: Indoors Or Outdoors - What is Best For Your Pet

Before you take on the responsibility of owning a cat or dog, you need to take the time to consider the living arrangements for your pet.

Many people adopt pets with the idea that they will be raising an outdoor animal. How many people in your neighborhood keep their dogs or cat's outdoors at all times? The fact of the matter is, outside is not a safe place for a cat or a dog. When you adopt a pet, you need to make sure that you are ready to allow your pet into your home.

Pets Love Being Outside

It is true that cats and dogs both will love being outside, it is their natural environment. Cats delight in chasing birds, climbing trees, and hiding in shrubs. Dogs adore barking at the neighbors, chasing squirrels, and digging. However, there are many dangers to keeping your pet outside at all times. Dogs tend to get more outside time in cats.

Owners take their dogs out for walks, and in some cases, allow their dogs, unsupervised access to the backyard from time to time. Cats are usually either indoor pets or outdoor pets.

It is more common nowadays, for owners to keep their cats indoors as they begin to realize the dangers of allowing their cat to live outdoors at all time. It is highly recommended that you keep your cats and dogs inside. For cats, you can help them explore their natural instincts inside by giving them plenty of places to run and play inside your home. Buy your cat a good scratching post with a high perch and install a window seat so they can gaze at the birds outdoors.

Dangers of Outside

The number one danger to your pets when they go outside is other animals. You never know when your dog or cat will encounter a stray or strange cat or dog from down the street. You know that your pet is properly vaccinated,

but you do not know that health condition of other animals outside. In addition, if your dog or cat gets into a fight with another animal. Your pet can be seriously injured or harmed. Unless you supervise your pet at all times when they are outside, you never know when your cat or dog will encounter a strange animal.

Other dangers of allowing your pet to live outside are cars and other people. A cat darting across the street late at night is a recipe for disaster. What if your dog gets loose from your yard and encounters a child? How will your dog react? You hope that your dog will be good and stay friendly.

However, what happens if the child begins to taunt or tease your dog or poke a stick at him? If your dog bites or scratches another person, chances are, you will be responsible for your pet's actions. Many pet owners have found themselves in a serious situation when their dog or cat has acted aggressively when outdoors.

When your cat or dog stays indoors, you can also help control fleas, ticks, and the exposure to heartworms. This is not to say that you should not treat an indoor pet for these problems. All dogs, whether the event indoors or outdoors, should be on a monthly heartworm preventative.

Both cats and dogs should also be treated with monthly preventative. It is important to remember though, if your cat or dog lives outdoors, you will have many more problems when it comes to fleas and ticks.

As you can see, there are many reasons why you should keep your dog or cat indoors. Pets that are indoor pets live longer and healthier lives than pets that live outside. This includes all pets, once you make them an indoor animal; you need to protect them from anything that might happen if they get outdoors, they now depend on you to provide a home for them.