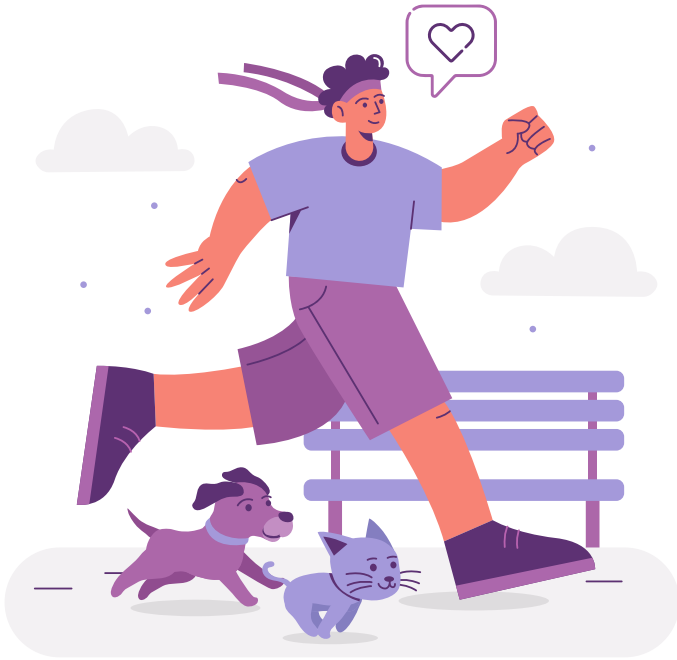




10 TIPS

FOR DOG AND CAT OWNERS



1

Make sure that your lifestyle is suitable for a dog or a cat...

Choose the right breed of animal to suit your way of life and consider how much time you can spend concentrating completely on your dog or cat on a regular basis without other distractions; proper care of cats and dogs requires daily time and input and remember to consider holidays too. Remember to factor in costs too, including saving for unexpected events.

2

Register with a vet and use preventative health care...

It can be tempting to cut corners on flea, tick, worming treatment and vaccinations, but changes in weather patterns and the increase in imported animals (many illegally imported) have resulted in more diseases and pests being prevalent, some of which can be fatal for animals and affect humans. Always use prescription treatments with appropriate advice from your vet; over the counter products are ineffective and a false economy.





3

Buy insurance if you can afford it

Insurance is a gamble but one that can really pay off; it is easy to run up a big bill very quickly if your dog or cat becomes ill or is involved in an accident. Make sure to buy cover for life and don't be tempted by apparent bargains that may leave you uncovered just when you need it or out of pocket as premiums are increased annually.

4

Set up a support network

Everyone needs a little help sometimes whether it's with training, exercise or house-sitting. Always use suitably qualified professionals and check their credentials. Look for accreditations such as KPA-CTP, ABTC, IAABC, IMDT and APDT and don't be afraid to interview candidates and ask for testimonials. Professional bodies' websites can be a good place to search.

HERE
TO HELP!



AWW!



5

Feed a good quality diet

Feeding a good quality, complete diet in the right amounts for your dog's or cat's lifestyle will make them feel good and have a beneficial effect on behaviour. You can use it to help with training too. Dogs are fine on dry food only but cats should be fed a mix of wet and dry. Teach them to enjoy having their teeth cleaned too.



6

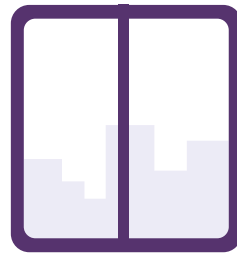
Check your dog or cat daily

Check for ticks and grass seeds after every dog walk or when your cat has been outside and look out for lumps and bumps or any changes in usual behaviour. Cats and dogs can be very stoical when unwell or injured so call your vet if you have any doubts - it's better to be safe than sorry.

7

Allow your dog or cat to make choices

Wherever possible, provide opportunities for your dog or cat to make choices. Let your dog choose the direction on walks and allow plenty of sniffing time without calling you dog away. Train good recall so that being off lead is safe and reliable. Provide hiding places for cats with at least one being high up. Cats will often vote with their paws if they don't want to be somewhere!



8

Work the body, work the mind

Feed your dog or cat from a puzzle toy instead of a bowl or scatter food for him to find. You can make cheap toys from used boxes and scrap paper. You can use part of the daily food allowance to teach him something new every month to keep body and brain in tip top condition throughout his life.





9

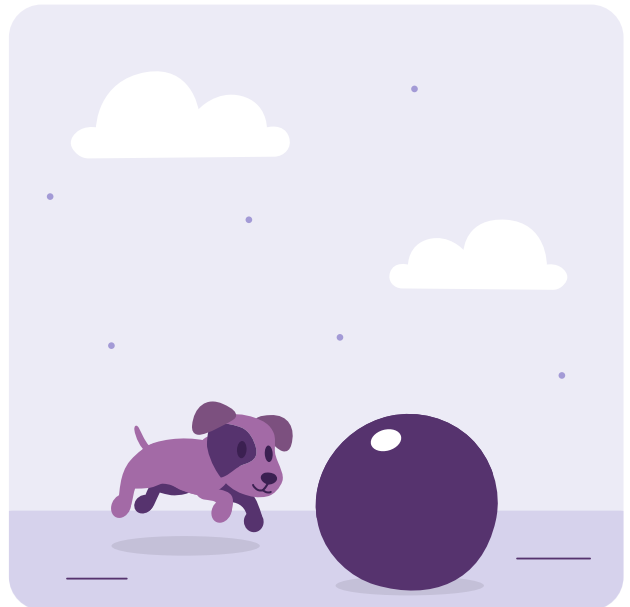
Use fear and force free training

Both dogs and cats benefit from and enjoy fear and force free training so find an accredited trainer who uses positive reinforcement and cooperation and set yourself up to have fun. If training always feels like a game to your cat or dog and not an exercise in obedience, they will be keen to come back for more.

10

Set up a support network

Train your dog for an activity; from regular agility sessions to a day's truffle hunting, there are dozens of options to choose from. You can compete or just learn something new for fun. You can set up a mini activity course at home for your cat using old boxes, towels, stools, egg boxes and anything similar that you have to hand and enjoy watching your cat solve problems.



Charlotte Kasner, MA, ADipCBM, ADipFBM, KPA-CTP, ABTC-AT, MISAP is a behaviourist and trainer working mainly with cats and dogs and sometimes horses. She established Dogs, Net.org as a portal for all things canine and as an information source for dog owners and provides private and group training for dogs and private training for cats through R+ Dog Training and Companion Animal Behavioural Services.



www.chiswickdogtraining.uk

www.companionanimalbehaviouralservices.co.uk