



pets in  
the city

[www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au)



'Pets in the City' is an initiative of the Petcare Information & Advisory Service (PIAS)  
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# what is “pets in the city”?

Pets in the City has been prepared by the Petcare Information and Advisory Service (PIAS) to assist people residing in higher density living to enjoy the many benefits offered by pets. The guide can help you decide whether you should have a pet, what the most suitable type of pet might be for you and how to enjoy life with your pet.

Australians love their pets. In fact, we have one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the world – more than half of all Australian households own a dog and/or a cat. Pet ownership seems to have always been part of the Australian way of life, something so normal we almost take it for granted. But things are changing.

Once, the great Australian dream was owning your own home on a quarter-acre block, with a BBQ, a Hills Hoist and a Blue Heeler in the backyard. But these days, that quintessential Australian scene is changing. Australians are more frequently living in townhouses, apartments and units, often within big cities. They're increasingly likely to live in a strata development with a BBQ on the balcony and a communal laundry.

According to Australian Census data, 77% of Australian households live in separate houses; 13% live in semi-detached, row, terrace or town houses; and 9% live in units or apartments. A total of 22%, or almost a quarter of all Australian households, are accommodated in what could be considered to be medium or high-density housing.

The idea of high-density living in strata or rental accommodation with limited, or no, yard space may not be particularly conducive to owning animal companions. Yet we know that Australians are adaptable and keen to find a way to keep their beloved pets in high-density environments. That's why we've produced *Pets in the City*, a “how to” guide covering everything you need to know about successfully keeping dogs and cats in apartments and inner urban areas.

As part of the preparation of this guide, PIAS commissioned a research agency to investigate pet ownership in high-density housing. We've used the research outcomes to provide information that will help both pet owners and those who would like to own a pet. Look out for our tips in the red boxes, the comments from experts in the orange boxes and case studies in the black boxes. And don't forget to visit the *Pets in the City* website ([www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au)) for extra information.

Whether you already own a companion animal or are contemplating getting one, this informative and helpful guide shows you that owning a dog or cat in the city can be easy with the correct selection, care and management.

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**Almost a quarter of Australians currently live in medium to high-density housing.**

**Between 1991 and 2001 the number of separate houses in Australia increased by 18% while the number of higher density dwellings increased by 37%.**

**During the same period there was a 43% increase in the number of lone person households.**

**This trend is set to continue, so in future we can expect to have even more people living closer together and in smaller groups or alone.**

# our changing lifestyles

Australia's social, cultural, political and technological environment is changing, influencing where we live and the way we live.

Australian Bureau of Statistics trends and urban planning guidelines all point to a dramatic increase in the density of accommodation in Australian cities. This will bring new challenges for many of us as we learn to live in smaller spaces and compete to use public services and public open space.

Along with changes in dwelling densities, there will also be changes to household structure; there are going to be more single-person households and our population will have a higher proportion of senior citizens. At the same time, lifestyles are becoming more hectic and people are working longer hours.

With all these social and practical lifestyle pressures it can be harder for some people to see how they could make pet ownership work. It's true that not everyone can or should own a dog or cat, but with 85% of Australians owning a pet at some time in their lives,

pet ownership is clearly a significant community interest. Pets in the City will help people understand the benefits and responsibilities pet ownership brings, especially for those living in high-density environments.

In preparing this guide, PIAS wanted to find out how many people actually do keep pets in the city and unearth information on how they managed them, discover any difficulties they might have experienced and ultimately find out how they overcame those difficulties.

Focus groups were interviewed and an extensive on-line survey was completed by over 800 respondents – all were pet owners or non-pet owners who'd like to own a dog or cat, and all were living in medium to high-density housing.

The research results were fascinating and informative. Most importantly, we learned that keeping pets in the city is very popular, with pet owners reporting very high levels of satisfaction.



# the power of pets



So what is it about pets that make Australians so keen to own them? Research in the last few decades is proving what we've always known anecdotally – pets aren't just good, they're actually good for us. We now know that pets can help improve our quality of life; they can reduce stress, improve health and provide much-needed companionship. Pets also encourage people to enjoy the outdoors, stimulate conversations between strangers and improve our feelings of safety.

In fact, pets appear to be the solution to reducing some of the stresses of modern living. For the vast majority of owners, the major benefit they attribute to their pet is quite simply "companionship" but there are many other positive side effects to this simple reward. Some of the benefits pets bring to our lives are listed here. For more detailed information on the health benefits of pets, visit *the power of pets* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).



## Michelle Bridges – Television Presenter & Healthy Lifestyle Expert

The research results speak for themselves – pets can have far-reaching benefits for the health of their owners, both psychologically and physiologically. Right now, when the world around us is rapidly changing and some people might be feeling a loss of control and perhaps a lack of confidence in the future, pets can provide a wonderful, back to basics contribution to our lives. For young and old, singles, couples and families, pets can encourage a happier, healthier lifestyle. My dog Paddy is my constant companion and a great exercise buddy.

While there are plenty of good reasons to own a pet, it's important to remember that not everyone can or should have a pet. People need to do their homework and make sure they choose the right type of pet, understand the care requirements of that pet and be confident that they're able to meet all the pet's needs, including being permitted to keep a pet where they live.

expert  
comment



### pets are good for your general health

- Pet owners are at lower risk of cardiovascular disease than non-pet owners.
- Pet owners visit the doctor and use fewer medications than non-pet owners.
- Pet owners are much less likely to die in the 12 months following a heart attack than non-pet owners.
- A study of widows found non-pet owners reported deterioration in their health after the death of a spouse, whereas pet owners did not.

### pets help prevent loneliness

- Research from the University of Western Australia shows that 70.5% of pet owners reported rarely or never feeling lonely, compared to 58.3% of non-pet owners.
- 74.5% of pet owners reported finding it easy to get to know people compared with 62.6% of non-pet owners.
- People love their pets and frequently regard them as members of the family; a recent survey showed that

92% of owners reported feeling very close to their pet, 93% of owners reported feeling very satisfied with their pet and 86% of people say when things go wrong it's comforting to be with their pet.

### dogs encourage exercise

- The likelihood of achieving the recommended level of physical activity per week was seven times higher for dog owners who walked with their dog five or more times per week compared with non-dog owners.
- Dog owners reported 55 more minutes of total physical activity per week than non-owners.

### pets are good for the community

- Pets encourage social interaction and improve perceptions of neighbourhood friendliness.
- People walking with a dog are more likely to have conversations with other people.
- Pets help facilitate social interactions for people with disabilities.

### pets are good for children

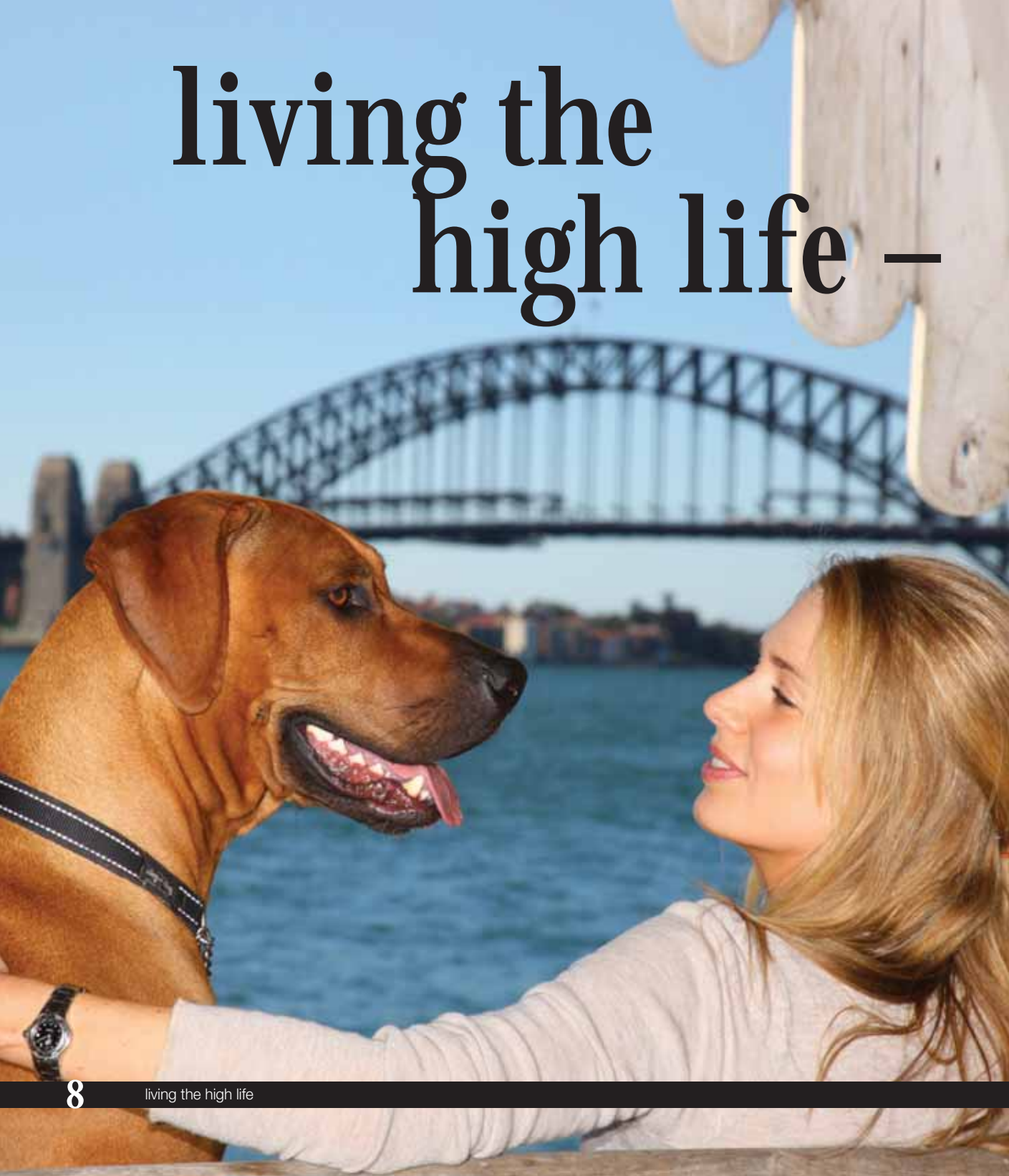
- Pets help children to develop nurturing and social skills.
- Children with pets are more popular with their peers and demonstrate greater empathy.
- Children with pets have higher self-esteem.
- Young children with pets exercise more and are less likely to be overweight.
- Pet ownership in early childhood helps prevent sensitivity to allergens in later life.

### pets are good for the elderly

- Pets in nursing homes are one of the few interventions capable of permanently lifting the mood of hospices and nursing homes.
- Pets boost activity levels in older people, helping to improve overall health in the elderly.

living the  
high life –

you can  
keep pets  
in the  
city



## Dr Anne Fawcett – Companion Animal Veterinarian

As a Veterinarian at a busy inner-suburban vet practice, I'm exposed on a daily basis to people who share their lives with pets in high-density areas. In my experience it's not the size of the yard or apartment that matters, it's the way in which the owners care for and manage their pet.

Selecting the right pet for the right environment and lifestyle is very important, but the key is being attentive to your pet's particular needs and quality of life. Owners who provide thoughtful, loving care and management of their pet, together with consideration of those around them, are able to have a richly rewarding bond – even when they have little or no outdoor space.

I love living in the city, but personally could not conceive of an existence not shared with animals – life's more interesting if you can share it with another species.

expert  
comment



Anne Fawcett & Patient

Across Australia, over 53% of households own a dog and/or a cat – which means more than half of all Australian homes include a furry, four-legged companion.

Traditionally, the typical Australian pet owner would have been married with children and living in the suburbs. So we weren't surprised when our research revealed that people living in medium-density dwellings were more likely to own pets than those living in high-density dwellings. It basically boiled down to the smaller the backyard or apartment, the less likely people are to own, or think they can own, a dog or a cat.

We also discovered, however, that plenty of pet owners are able to successfully and responsibly keep dogs and cats in high-rise apartments and small dwellings with very little difficulty.

In fact, dog and cat owners in highly urbanised surrounds reported high levels of satisfaction with pet ownership

(94% and 93% respectively), with just 1% of dog owners and 2% of cat owners expressing dissatisfaction.

These levels of satisfaction are equal to that achieved among the general population in another large survey, the 2006 National People and Pets Survey. Such rates demonstrate to us that satisfaction with pets is no lower in higher density housing than in less urbanised areas.

The message is clear: plenty of people keep pets in the densely populated urban areas and enjoy it just as much as those who keep pets in larger houses with bigger backyards.

Information and tips on strategies to help maximise your enjoyment of your pet and minimise any problems are included in the following sections.

**Research shows that many people keep dogs and cats in the city and they enjoy it just as much as people who keep them in the suburbs with larger houses and bigger backyards.**







Craig, Beau & Missy



# case study

## one dog, two cats and no backyard

Craig lives in a three-storey apartment in inner-suburban Sydney. He shares his home with Golden Retriever, Beau and two cats, Tieger and Missy. Despite having very limited outdoor space, he manages to keep his three pets comfortably in his elegant home.

“I haven’t experienced any major difficulties keeping pets in a smaller outdoor space and so close to the city,” reports Craig. “I already had Tieger and Beau when I moved here and they were used to being city pets, so I simply modified our surroundings to help accommodate their needs. Missy the kitten is a more recent addition and she’s settled in really well.”

The apartment already had a tiled outdoor terrace over which Craig built a suspended timber deck. This provides a drained surface that Beau can access any time through a pet door. The terrace has a tap and hose which help make it easy to keep clean. There is also a rear verandah that’s been enclosed with louvres, providing an indoor/outdoor area where the cats can be contained. Craig removed the original timber strip flooring and polished the concrete slab providing a beautiful, practical floor surface that stands up well to the dog and cats.

“This area is surrounded by large, dog-friendly parks making it easy to start each day by taking Beau for a walk

or run. I work full-time so I ensure the pets have the run of the house and plenty of toys and activities to stimulate them when I’m not home,” says Craig. “The pets help make my apartment feel like a home and I wouldn’t be without them.”

Golden Retrievers are a large and quite energetic breed, but Craig was aware of that fact and was well prepared for the effort he’d need to make to manage that particular type of dog. Not having a backyard means Craig spends plenty of time at the park exercising with Beau – something he sees as a benefit.





# downsizing

# with pets



It's vital that people choose a pet that's suitable for high-density living, but what should you do if you already own a dog or a cat and you're making the move from a large home to smaller premises?

Australians are increasingly choosing to downsize to high-rise apartments and townhouses from the traditional house on a larger block. And it isn't just people approaching retirement who are making the move – it's people of all ages and lifestyles.

Many people choosing to live in an apartment may be downsizing in space, but not in their lifestyle expectations! Instead, they're looking for high-quality, low-maintenance apartments with the lifestyle of a traditional home – and this includes taking their four-legged family members with them.



# tips to help you prepare your pet for the move

- Give yourself and your pet as much time as you can to gradually build up the amount of time your pet spends indoors. Consider leaving your pet inside when you leave the house or when you go to sleep. Look to build up and combine these times until your pet is spending virtually no unsupervised time outdoors.
- Keep in mind that most cats can readily adapt to living indoors; in fact indoor cats have a longer lifespan, suffer fewer injuries and accidents, and are less of a threat to native birds and animals. Cats love a warm, cosy place to sleep, so consider using a heated pad to help entice them to stay indoors. More information on creating a pet-friendly space can be found on page 77 (in the *great outdoors...or not* section) and information on safe outdoor access for cats can be found on page 84 (in the *common problems* section).
- When you first start training your dog to spend more time indoors, without access to outdoor areas, consider developing a pet support network. Friends and family may be willing to call in during the day, check on your dog, and even take him out for a quick toilet break until he becomes used to the situation. Also consider looking into online pet networks in your area where you can swap pet favours with others who may be in a similar situation. For more detailed information on online pet networks, visit the *downsizing with pets* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).
- If your pet is used to being fed outside but will have to eat inside at your new premises, make that adjustment before you move. Try to accustom your pet to being fed in a similar area to wherever you plan to locate the food and water bowls in your new home.
- If possible, find out where you can walk your dog before you move and walk the dog there a few times before the move so your dog is familiar with the area.
- To help reduce stress associated with the actual move, ask your vet about using feline or canine pheromone diffusers in the house. Use them before you leave and plug them in for a few days in the new house before the pet arrives. Also reward your pet for being calm and be sure to downplay or ignore any anxious responses.
- Update your pet's registration/microchip details by contacting your local council and/or the microchip database register, so that if your pet does stray they have your new address and are able to contact you.

It's understandable that people may feel some concern about their pet's welfare when moving to smaller premises and wonder whether their pet will be happy. With some forethought and management, you can help your pet love your new living arrangements; in fact, some pets might actually benefit from spending more time indoors and being closer to their owner.

If you are planning to downsize with an existing pet, it's important to get your pet used to their new routine as soon as possible. This might involve restricting outdoor activity to the times when you will be able to walk your dog from the new home and establishing a routine for feeding times. For cats it may mean teaching them to be kept entirely indoors.

## room to move

If you are moving your dog or cat to a home where they will not have access to outdoor space, begin to restrict your pet's outdoor access well before you make the move. You may be surprised to find your pet is more than happy to spend extra time indoors.

For more information on downsizing with pets and online pet networks, visit the *downsizing with pets* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

**If you are planning a move to an apartment or townhouse and have a dog already, it's important to get him used to a new routine and access restrictions as soon as possible.**



## Dr Kersti Seksel – Veterinary Behaviourist

Living with a pet can be a very rewarding experience but it also has its challenges. Moving house is stressful for everyone, including your pet. So thinking about how you can make the move less stressful and planning in advance is important. In some cases it is better to have your pet boarded during the move and only move them in when everyone is settled and the familiar furniture is unpacked. That way they will not get in the way and you do not have to worry about them while you are unpacking and getting things organised.

Moving to a smaller space is not necessarily a bad thing. Space in itself is not the most important thing; it is what is available in that space (to exercise mind as well as body) and the ability to use it that enriches a pet's life. Additionally, the space has to be safe and secure from your perspective as well as the pet's perspective, so that everyone has peace of mind.



Kersti Seksel & Indi

expert comment

### toileting

If you're moving to a home where your pet won't be able to take herself outside to toilet, start to impose this restriction on your pet in your current home. If your cat is not used to using a litter tray you should accustom her to this prior to the move. Similarly, every time your dog needs to go to the toilet, put her on a lead and take her outside for a quick walk until she relieves herself (making sure you always have poo bags with you). Your dog will soon get used to the idea that she has to leave the premises to go to the toilet. You can start with more frequent outings and gradually reduce the number of opportunities you give your dog. Most healthy adult dogs can be restricted to two or three toilet opportunities a day. More information on ways to modify your pet's toilet training can be found on pages 86 – 87 (in the *common problems* section). For more information, visit the *downsizing with pets* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## tips to help you modify your pet's toilet training

- Create a clear toileting routine for your dog – most dogs feel safe and secure if they have a familiar pattern of events to follow. You can typically take your dog for a walk first thing in the morning, then again when you get home from work and again before you go to bed. Again, start doing this before you make the move.
- Dog toilets are a recent innovation for inner-city pet owners. They can be useful for apartments with balconies or homes with restricted outdoor access. If you're planning to use one of these products, train your dog to be accustomed to using it before you make the move.
- If your cat will be restricted to indoors, it's essential she learns to use a kitty litter tray. To accustom your cat to using a litter tray, start by providing several litter trays. Try different types of litter until you find one she is happy to use. If your cat is still reluctant to use the tray, you can also try starting off with a mix of 90% soil and 10% commercial litter until she starts using the tray, then gradually increase it until it's entirely commercial litter.
- If you have more than one cat, ensure you provide one litter tray per cat. Clean the litter tray daily. Litter trays need to be 1½ times the size of the cat. Reward the cat for using the tray.



Sue & Hannah

# case study

## moving a dog from a country home to the inner city

Sue bought her Australian Cattle Dog, Hannah, when she lived in Toowoomba in Queensland. Two years later she relocated to Albert Park in inner-suburban Melbourne and Hannah had to learn to live in a small terrace house with a tiny backyard.

“I bought Hannah as a puppy from a farm in Queensland and for the first couple of years we lived in a home with a large, well-fenced garden in Toowoomba. A work transfer resulted in a move to Melbourne and we ended up buying a terrace house. I knew it was going to be a shock for Hannah going from a huge yard to a tiny courtyard,” said Sue.

Cattle Dogs are well known for their high energy levels, and Sue was aware that becoming an inner-city canine

was likely to present some challenges for both dog and owner. “I started to walk Hannah more frequently and kept her indoors more often prior to the move,” says Sue. “I was also aware that exercise alone wouldn’t be enough and that Hannah would require extra mental stimulation to avoid becoming bored.

“Once we moved to Melbourne I made a point of taking Hannah with me wherever I went, whenever I could. She visited friends with me, came to the shops – basically, at every opportunity, I would have her with me. Whenever I was home I allowed her to be indoors with me and she also slept indoors. In this way I provided her with as much companionship and stimulation as possible.”

It was fortunate that Sue liked walking and was happy to spend over an hour a day walking with Hannah. “We never really had any problems. I was aware of my dog’s needs and I was prepared to modify my lifestyle to help meet those needs,” says Sue.

A couple of years later Sue moved to inner-suburban Sydney, and the transition was fine. In fact, Hannah became used to living almost entirely indoors. “It’s really about thinking things through and being aware of the changes you might have to make,” comments Sue. “I could leave Hannah all day while I was at work; as long as she had a walk and a toilet opportunity before and after work, she’d stay happily in the house all day. Accidents and destructive behaviour were an absolute rarity.”





# overcoming pet permissibility issues

Before you explore the idea of getting a new pet or moving with an existing pet, it's vital to work out whether you're permitted to keep a pet where you live or are planning to live. It's a sad fact that many medium and high-density dwellings simply don't permit pets. In most states of Australia, strata developments determine their own by-laws, and often the by-laws relating to the keeping of animals state that dogs and cats are not permitted. Similarly, tenants in rental accommodation are often banned from keeping dogs and cats.

We wanted to find out to what extent pet ownership is impacted by rental and strata conditions, so we asked our survey respondents what type of premises they lived in and whether they were actually permitted to keep pets.



- We asked non-pet owners (people who didn't own a dog or a cat but would like to) the reason why they didn't own a pet: 67% of them said that the key reason was due to housing limitations. This included not being allowed to own a pet, not having enough space or because they were renting from a landlord who prohibited pets.
- We then asked both pet and non-pet owners whether they were actually allowed to keep pets where they lived. Just 47% responded that they were permitted to keep a dog, while 58% said that they were allowed to keep cats.
- For people living in rental accommodation, the situation was much worse: 24% were allowed to keep any type of dog, 13% were allowed to keep certain types of dog, 12% were unsure whether they were allowed to keep a dog and a whopping 51% were not permitted to keep a dog at all.
- Not surprisingly, our research revealed that dogs were more likely to be permitted in medium-density housing

(semi-detached, row or terrace houses) as opposed to higher density housing (flats, units and apartments). When we dug deeper and asked whether it was the landlord or the body corporate that was responsible for banning dogs, 39% said they were not permitted by their body corporate and 28% were not permitted by their landlord.

- 20% of pet owners told us they had to negotiate with their landlord or body corporate to gain permission to keep a pet, and 11% (mainly cat owners) indicated that the landlord or body corporate were unaware they had a pet.

For many people, therefore, pet ownership is not a choice they are permitted. They may want pets but are unable to own them because of restrictions imposed by landlords and body corporates.

It's hard to understand why pets are so often banned from strata and rental premises. It seems strange that

a country that boasts such high levels of pet ownership appears to be so restrictive about owning pets in certain types of housing.

Perhaps it's become an automatic response in Australia to say no to pets, or perhaps there's a notion that a pet-friendly development could become dangerously overrun with dogs and cats that create nuisance. Maybe it's the idea that tenants with pets will be more problematic and properties will be more likely to suffer damage.

The hard facts, however, reveal that this doesn't have to be the case. Pet-friendly developments tend to report minimal pet-related problems, and pet owners are shown to make excellent, responsible and reliable long-term tenants.







Caribbean Apartments

# case study

## pets permitted – good returns for investors

Gerry and Chris Lewis are the managers of Caribbean Apartments on Kawana Island on the Queensland Sunshine Coast. The developers chose to include a Pets Permitted clause for the upmarket apartment complex and it's proven to be a huge success. Most of the owners are investors who live all over Australia and, as the Resident Managers, Gerry and Chris have permission from most owners to accept applications from prospective tenants who have pets.

Several of the 63 units on its four levels are home to pets. "We've been up and running for approximately 18 months and have quite a few good-quality tenants who have small pets such as a dog, cat, goldfish or birds," says Gerry. "The apartments each have an enclosed, secure front entry and expansive balconies, and they face a beautiful park area with 10 kilometres of walking/ bike tracks around a stunning waterway for both tenants and their pets to exercise. When people find out this is a pet-friendly complex they are delighted."

The managers try to meet every four-legged tenant personally and their owners must go through the normal channels of inspection: application, reference checks etc. They also submit a pet résumé and sign a Pet Rental Agreement which binds them to being responsible for their pet's behaviour and any damage they might cause. "Several dogs and cats presently call the Caribbean Apartments home and there has not been a single problem since the complex opened," says Gerry.







If you want to keep a pet in a strata development, check that the by-laws are pet-friendly before you commit to living there. Being told by the real estate agent that the building is pet-friendly is not enough.

## pets in strata developments

Pets are permitted in some strata developments but not in others. The following are some considerations to be aware of when investigating whether pets are permitted where you live or are planning to live.

### investigate the by-laws

If you're planning to live in a strata development, it pays to investigate the rules relating to keeping animals for that particular development.

All owners and residents living in a strata scheme must obey a set of by-laws, which may vary from one development to another. It's important, therefore, to ensure that the by-laws permit pet ownership before you make the commitment to live there.

This is true whether you're buying or renting. Even if your landlord is happy for you to keep pets, if the by-laws don't permit them, there's a good chance your pet will be barred from the building.

Ultimately, being told by the real estate agent you're dealing with that the building is pet-friendly is not enough. It's far better that you and/or your solicitor investigate the development's by-laws to make sure that pets are permitted. This is particularly important if you're planning to buy a strata property.

### strata by-laws

Model by-laws may be adopted by an owners corporation (also sometimes known as the body corporate), or an owners corporation can introduce by-laws of their own determination.

By-laws generally include a clause relating to pet ownership. For example, the model by-law commonly used in NSW states: "16. Keeping of animals: An owner or occupier must not keep an animal unless they have the written permission of the owners corporation. The owners corporation must not unreasonably refuse permission to keep an animal."

A model by-law such as this may be in place in your development but there are many other variations of by-laws relating to pets. Some developments might determine their own by-laws that permit pets with written approval, while others may state that pets are simply not permitted.





### lobby for pet-friendly by-laws

In some instances, residents will keep pets in a strata development even though the by-laws for that development state that pets are not allowed.

Sometimes people will get a pet because others in the development have pets and there may seem to be tacit permission. This can be fine until your or someone else's pet presents a problem to the building, or an anti-pet resident or group decide that the by-laws should be enforced, with the result that pets are not allowed.

In such a situation it may be possible to become involved with the owners corporation and lobby to change the by-laws to be more pet-friendly. It's always better to work with the owners corporation than to break the rules.

Recommending that a new by-law be adopted whereby pets can be kept with approval in writing from the owners corporation may be one tactic you wish to try. Such a change will generally require a meeting of all owners, who will vote on a special resolution to change the by-laws. The vote must be carried by a majority.

### be alert to potential by-law changes

Just as pet owners may want to have pet-friendly by-laws introduced, be aware that anti-pet residents may also want to change by-laws to ban pets.

Some pet owners buy into a development because of its pet-friendly policy, only to discover later that the owners corporation are seeking to ban pets.

This can create a really sad situation where people are faced with the choice of either moving out of their home or getting rid of their beloved pet. If this happens to you, there are actions you can take. You can rally supporters to oppose the resolution (see the case study on page 23) and you can seek legal advice.

There have been instances where by-law changes have been executed in the necessary way and the changes have been overturned.





## Clayton Glennister – Body Corporate Lawyer

As a specialist in body corporate law and also strata schemes, I have seen many instances where pet ownership has been a very emotional and expensive process for all parties involved. One way to avoid this is to check the by-laws which apply to the building you are looking to buy into, and to speak with your solicitor to make sure that your contract of sale is subject to the owners corporation or the body corporate approving your pet. This will mean that such approval is sought prior to you moving into the building.

By the most part, pet ownership comes down to the responsibility of those owners. Suitable animals and responsible pet ownership should in most cases cause little disruption to the community-style living. However, most by-laws place a restriction on the weight of a dog; in many instances, owners are not able to have a dog if it weighs more than 10 kgs. This is blatantly unfair and does not take into account the nature, attributes and personality of the particular breed.



Clayton Glennister

expert comment

## tips for negotiating pet-friendly by-laws

Try to gain the support of the other residents and/or the body corporate by presenting them with these points:

- Permitting some residents to keep pets doesn't mean allowing all residents to keep pets – approval should only be given to owners who demonstrate themselves to be responsible.
- The building is not likely to be overrun with animals – a Queensland survey of pet-friendly developments found that only around 10% of occupants owned dogs.
- Pet-friendly policies can increase property values – the same Queensland survey found that people would pay 5–10% more to buy a property where they could keep their pet, with agents reporting that they created 50% more buyer interest.
- Policies can be introduced to determine how people will keep their pets, ensuring that there will be no nuisance caused for other residents.





Bernie, Warren & Bente

# case study

## battle over by-law changes

A Gold Coast couple recently spent a large amount of money on a legal battle to ensure that they could continue to keep their pet dog in their high-rise apartment. Bente and Warren Tutton bought their multimillion-dollar apartment because it was pet-friendly. They kept their Maltese-Shih Tzu cross, Bernie, without issue until changes to the membership of the body corporate resulted in a number of “anti-pet” residents campaigning to change the by-laws to ban pets.

“We were alarmed to discover that as few as 17% of the lot owners can change a by-law,” said Warren. “It’s generally known that a two-thirds majority vote is required to change any by-law, but what is not so widely known is that it’s actually only a two-thirds majority of a quorum.” As an example, in the Tuttons’

building of 102 lot owners, a quorum is only 25% of the lot owners; therefore, two-thirds of 25% is only 17 votes. The Tuttons soon found out the hard way that 17 residents could dramatically change their lifestyle.

The vote to change the original by-law banned any future pets from entering the building, but did not make the Tuttons give up their pet. It did, however, ban the Tuttons from replacing Bernie and also banned them from selling their unit to a pet owner. “We’ve completed a fair amount of research on this issue and have testimony from the largest real estate agents in the country that have declared that pet-friendly buildings attract a premium price by as much as 10%,” states Warren. “Therefore, if one looks at what the anti-pet mob did, it potentially reduced the selling price of our unit by as much as 10%, which in our case is almost half million dollars!”

By-laws cannot be illegally changed, but in the Tuttons’ case, the pet ban was carried out legally. The Tuttons undertook lengthy and expensive legal challenges that only ended when they won an appeal based on a point of law. The result determined that the change to the by-law was unreasonable, and the original pet-friendly by-law was reinstated.

Originally 10 of the 102 units had dogs; after the change to the by-law, there were only two dogs left living in the building. “In our opinion, if a building is advertised and marketed as “pets allowed”, then a vote by 100% of the lot owners should be required to change the by-laws,” said Warren. “Our situation shows that there are several issues which unsuspecting apartment purchasers must look out for if they have a pet.”

## Virginia Jackson – Town Planner

In the last decade, Australians have embraced apartment living. What was once a pipe dream of all Australian governments is now an obvious reality. Pet owners have been part of this trend. Many are not willing to give up the companionship of their pets – nor should they be forced to, in my opinion, given the now-proven health, companionship and community benefits of owning pets. These benefits are especially important for empty nesters or those who live alone.

What is required to make this a reality? First is a change in mindset – about what is an appropriate environment for keeping pets. Animal behaviourists will tell you that a loved pet can live just as well in an apartment as in a house with a large backyard. Second is a change in unreasonable rules imposed by landlords and owners corporations. And third is a willingness by developers to instigate the principles of pet-friendly design. These principles do not require wholesale change to the way we build apartments. Little things like accessible window sills, for example, can make a big difference to the life of the indoor cat.

expert



## pet-friendly developments

In recent years there's been a definite trend towards up-market apartment blocks becoming pet-friendly – that is to say they have by-laws that clearly permit pets, and some even actively promote pet ownership. There's a growing belief among developers, real estate agents and buyers that pet-friendly by-laws can improve the value of a building. With so many people wanting to own dogs and cats, if they're expressly excluded from buying into a development because animals aren't allowed, then there will naturally be less competition in the market for that apartment as a result.

Many exclusive apartment developments in Sydney and Melbourne now promote themselves as being pet-friendly. Pet-friendly developments in Sydney include

Jacksons Landing in Pymont, Lumiere in the city, Meta by Starck and St Margarets in Surry Hills, Republic 2 in East Sydney and Darling Island at Pymont.

In Melbourne pet-friendly developments include Freshwater Place at Southbank and 70 Lorimer Street at Docklands.

It's clear that as people take up city life and try to create a 'Manhattan' lifestyle, a pet is often part of the family and needs to be considered and accommodated.

For more detailed information on pet-friendly developments, visit the *pet-friendly developments* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).







Dog's Breakfast at Jacksons Landing

# case study

## progressive pet-friendly developments are fast becoming a model for others

With more than 2,600 people living on approximately 12 hectares, a new residential community created by Vivas Lend Lease at Pymont Point in Sydney has become one of Australia's largest pet-friendly, waterfront developments. Jacksons Landing utilises practical, clever and attractive design solutions to cater to both pet and non-pet owners.

Almost 200 dogs live at the development, which boasts plenty of open parkland and special doggy-do bins. Residents have even formed a group called the 'Pymont Pooch Party' which meets regularly to hold parties for their pets and owners in one of the estate's harbourfront parklands. Some people who have moved to the Pymont Peninsula development found the lifestyle so appealing that they became the happy owner of their first dog.

"The great cities of the world have pet-friendly apartments, and we have followed their example," said Hugh Martin, the Executive Director of Vivas Lend Lease. The pet-friendly approach has been a great success, and is fast becoming a model for other residential developments.

The developers have ensured their apartments and open spaces are pet-friendly by having:

- Large safe balconies
- Good insulation and soundproofing
- Floor-to-ceiling windows so pets can also enjoy the view.

The residential community has been taking shape for the past 12 years and has regular campaigns devoted to attracting residents with pets, including lavish Dog's

Breakfast events. An estimated 1,800 dogs and their owners attended each of these two free events, which featured vets, trainers and animal organisations, pet fashion shows, dog sports, contests plus many stalls and demonstrations.

"The Dog's Breakfast events are a practical way of showing dog owners that our residential community is a great, pet-friendly place to live with plenty of space to exercise animals and enjoy the lifestyle," says Hugh. "Being pet-friendly certainly adds to the appeal and has helped convince many people to buy here. We also believe our pet-friendly policies and features increase the value of the apartments when it comes time for vendors to sell."



## overcoming the rental crisis

Several years ago PIAS, through the Australian Companion Animal Council, undertook a survey of pet ownership in rental accommodation. The results indicated that less than 10% of real estate agents had a formal policy towards pets, with few residential tenancy agreements even mentioning them. So while nearly two-thirds of Australian households include pets, only a few seem to be actually permitted to keep them in a rental situation. PIAS believes the benefits of pet ownership should be available to everyone, not just people who own their own home.

Locating pet-friendly rental accommodation can be a frustrating process, with so many properties not permitting pets. A new on-line service is available that gives pet owners the ability to quickly search for pet-friendly rentals listed on the major real estate sites such as domain.com.au or realestate.com.au, greatly increasing the chance of finding a suitable property. The site

also provides a range of other resources and helpful information to assist pet owners locate and attain appropriate accommodation. For more detailed information on finding pet-friendly rentals online, visit the *overcoming the rental crisis* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

Property managers and landlords select prospective tenants from a pool of applicants but this process shouldn't necessarily discriminate against pet owners. If you can prove you are a good tenant and a responsible pet owner, you are more likely to be considered. A good past record of paying the rent on time and references that include your pet will obviously help.

The brochures *Tenants with Pets* and *Renting with Pets*, produced by the Australian Companion Animal Council, provide information that is relevant to each state and

territory in Australia. They provide information to help landlords, managing agents and pet owners overcome the issues associated with pets in rental accommodation, including a sample rental agreement. For more information on renting with pets and tenants with pets, visit the *overcoming the rental crisis* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

And finally, remind the owner or managing agent that a well-managed pet-friendly policy can actually help improve profitability, broaden the pool of prospective tenants, lower vacancy rates and reduce tenant turnover. Permitting one tenant to own a pet does not mean that all tenants will be allowed to own pets – clear guidelines and policies on the keeping of pets can help property owners and agents to carefully screen out irresponsible pet owners.

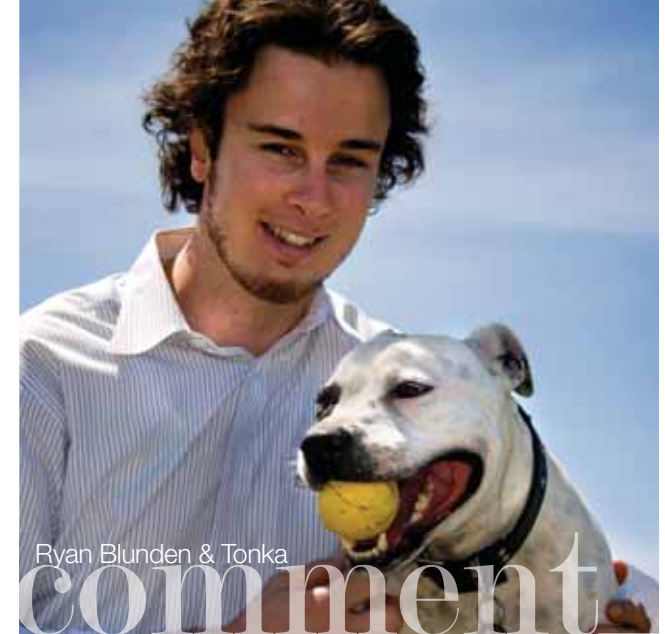


## Ryan Blunden – Pet-friendly Rentals

A few years ago I nearly had to give up my dog Tonka because I was finding it so hard to find somewhere suitable for the two of us to live. It was such a distressing and worrying time that I swore I would do whatever I could to prevent other people from having to experience the same kind of stress. I developed an on-line tool to help pet owners locate pet-friendly rental accommodation. I can also suggest the following tips:

- In the first instance, look for properties where the agent or owner states that they are prepared to accept pets
- Present yourself as a responsible pet owner and your pet as well behaved by preparing a supportive pet résumé
- If you're interested in a property that isn't clearly pet-friendly, make sure you provide information to show you're a great tenant and a great pet owner and be prepared to do some negotiating
- Good references are critical!

expert comment



Ryan Blunden & Tonka

## tips to help you gain approval to keep pets in rental accommodation

- Raise the subject of pets in person with the owner or the managing agent if possible. Presenting information about you and your pet will have more impact if it's done face to face.
- Prepare a pet résumé. Include a de-sexing certificate, vaccination certificate, any dog training certificates and, most importantly, written references from past landlords. If you haven't previously rented with your pet, obtain a reference from a neighbour, your vet, a dog trainer or other animal professional. In addition, mention anything about your pet's age, activity levels or character traits which will help reinforce that they will be a good tenant.
- Offer to sign a pet agreement, clearly defining the behaviour and responsibilities appropriate to the rental premises.
- Ensure you're aware of any special by-laws relating to pet ownership if you're going to be a tenant in a strata development.
- Potentially meet with the owner or managing agent to enable you to introduce your pet and prove that they are responsibly cared for and obedient.
- For more information on finding pet friendly rental accommodation, visit the *overcoming the rental crisis* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).





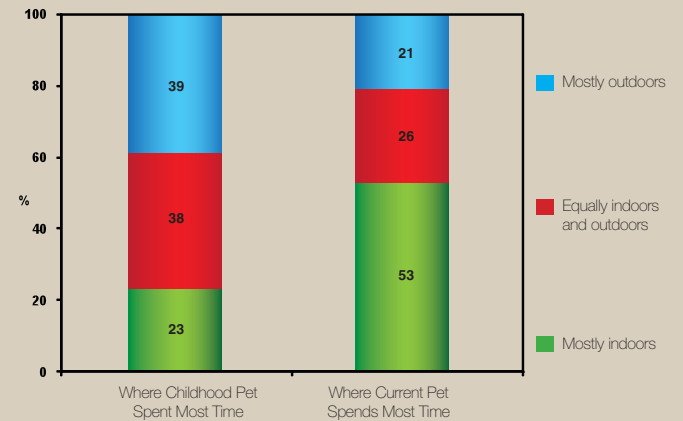
# step out of the past and into the future



We've looked at some practical ways to manage downsizing premises with existing pets and the issue of whether you're actually permitted to keep pets where you want to live...now it's time to tackle the way we keep pets today and the type of pets that are best suited to that type of living.

We've discovered that many people find it hard to reconcile their previous experiences of pet ownership with what may be appropriate for their new inner-suburban lifestyle. Our research showed that many people simply could not envisage having a different breed of dog to the one they had as a child, nor could they imagine keeping a dog or cat almost entirely indoors.

The way we kept pets a decade or two ago is very different from the way we keep pets now – the dogs we had in our childhood are likely to have been larger breeds and more energetic, and to have spent most of their time outdoors. It's all a matter of adjusting our mind-set.



Comparison – where Pets in the City survey respondents' childhood pets and current pets spend their time

## you don't have to keep pets the same way as when you were a child

Most of us grew up with dogs or cats as part of our childhood. Our relationships with these animals tended to be very close and our childhood memories often involve the family pet. For many of us, this makes us all the more inclined to want to own a pet in later life, but it can also pose a problem for inner-city dwellers.

The way Australians kept pets a decade or two ago is very different from the way we keep pets now – the dogs we had in our childhood are likely to have been larger breeds that were more energetic and spent most of their time outdoors. The cats we grew up with may have been free to roam in and out of our houses and yards, and may even have been locked out of the house at night. These days we know that it's important for everyone's amenity and safety (and especially for the safety of our dogs and cats) that our pets should always be kept secure on our property.

The fact that many of us grew up on a typical Australian suburban quarter-acre block may have helped to perpetuate the myth that you need to have a large backyard to own a dog. In fact, research shows us that dogs and cats are spending increasing amounts of time indoors and are regarded as family members.

However, some people still seem to think that dogs need a big backyard to run around in. The truth is that even though outdoor space is an important consideration, most dogs don't just run around the yard on their own. In fact, dogs are more likely to become bored when left alone in a large yard, rather than spending time indoors with their family and taken on frequent outings.

Our research revealed that only a few short decades ago, 39% of respondents' family pets spent most of their time

outdoors and only 23% spent most of their time indoors. In stark contrast, the new research revealed only 21% of current pets spent most of their time outdoors, whilst 53% spent most their time indoors. In fact, almost a third of all dogs spent virtually all their time indoors.

It's all a matter of adjusting our mind-set. In large cities in Europe and America, people have been successfully keeping pets indoors for many years. Keeping dogs and cats with limited outdoor space is not only possible but can actually work very well for both humans and animals.

On pages 74 – 79 (in the *great outdoors...or not* section), we give you information to help you successfully manage pets in smaller spaces, along with tips for creating pet-friendly spaces.



# case study

## a generation of difference

Like other typical Australian families of the 1960s and '70s, Stephen's family lived on a quarter-acre house block in Sydney and had a range of pets: dogs, guinea pigs, mice, birds and fish. The main family dogs, Suzy and Cindy, both had kennels in the backyard; they were free to wander in and out of the house with the four kids during the day, and were chained up at their kennels before the family went to sleep every night.

Skip forward 30 or so years, and Stephen now keeps his dog Patsy in a very different way from the dogs of his childhood. "Although our dogs did spend time in the house when we were kids, they were always

locked outdoors when we went out and they were always chained up at night," says Stephen. "It's completely different from how I keep my current dog Patsy."

Stephen lives in a one-bedroom apartment with front and rear courtyards, and works full time. Despite the apartment having direct access to its own garden, Patsy, a 10-year-old Border Collie cross, lives almost completely indoors. "I never would have imagined I'd keep a dog this way but it works just fine," Stephen says. "I live very close to a harbour-front park and I take Patsy for a long walk every morning and evening.

Patsy's perfectly happy to snooze indoors all day while I'm at work. I guess I could put in a doggy door but Patsy really prefers to be inside."

Even though Patsy is an energetic dog, she receives lots of exercise and spends as much time as possible with her owner. On the occasions that Stephen works longer hours nearby family and friends will walk or mind Patsy so she's not locked indoors too long.







## you don't have to have the same breed of dog you had as a child

The dog breeds that were common a couple of decades ago were often larger than those that are popular today and are now sometimes rarely seen. It's natural to want the same breed you've favoured in the past but if that breed isn't suitable for higher density living, you should be looking for a more suitable dog with similar traits.

It's a simple fact that some breeds of dogs and cats are more likely than others to suit our new and busy inner-city lifestyles. The Golden Retriever or Kelpie Cross that we grew up with is often not the most viable choice for apartment living.

Just because the breed of dog you had as a child may not be suitable for inner-city living, it doesn't mean that you can't find a breed that has similar traits but is more appropriate. And importantly, living in high-density surrounds doesn't necessarily restrict you to small dogs – many of the larger breeds are quiet, calm, require little exercise and are actually well suited to homes with limited outdoor areas.

But keep in mind that there is no breed of dog that should be purchased for the purpose of waiting in your apartment all day, day after day, while you go to work and go out. Any dog that is left alone for very long periods is likely to be unhappy and bored, probably resulting in damage to your apartment or garden. Never buy a dog if it will not be an important part of your or your family's life and activities.

Most purebred dogs were originally selectively bred to perform specialised tasks, and their temperament, behaviour and often their appearance reflects this. Some dogs were bred for hunting so they possess a strong drive to follow scent and/or dig to catch prey. Some of the working breeds were developed to herd livestock, and consequently have a strong urge to chase and bark or nip. Other breeds have been developed for guarding and are protective, while others have been bred simply to be quiet companions or lap dogs.

some examples of breeds with similar character traits

### terriers

Many of us grew up with a terrier in the household – Fox Terriers, Jack Russell Terriers and Airedale Terriers have all been popular. Terriers are typically tough little dogs bred primarily for vermin hunting and with the courage and tenacity to follow their prey underground. They're popular as family dogs, able to tolerate and join in the rough and tumble of outdoor life. They typically have high energy levels, but the compact size of several breeds means some will adapt well to life in a smaller space, particularly if their high exercise requirements are met. While many terriers can be too lively and noisy to fit well into high-density living, there are several breeds that may be suitable. These include the West Highland White Terrier, Miniature Schnauzer, Australian Terrier and the Bedlington Terrier.





## hounds

Scenthounds and Sighthounds have been quite popular in Australia over the years. Beagles and Dachshunds, in particular, have been common and at one stage Afghan Hounds were all the rage. Hounds are generally highly active dogs bred to follow animals being hunted. They are driven by their nose or by sight, and can be quite independent. If you like hounds you might find that a Miniature Dachshund, Greyhound, Italian Greyhound or Whippet will suit a smaller space and an inner-city lifestyle.

## gun dogs, working dogs and larger breeds

Twenty or 30 years ago there were a number of larger dog breeds that were hugely popular – Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, Dalmations, Irish Setters, Collies, Border Collies, Cattle Dogs, Kelpies, German Shepherds and German Shorthaired Pointers were all commonly

seen in suburbs across Australia. These breeds were originally bred to be gun dogs or working dogs and are typically very energetic and active, but also very trainable.

These breeds were popular at a time when the large backyard with the Hills Hoist was the norm. There was more space, dogs spent more time outdoors and Mum was less likely to be working outside the home. If you live in the inner suburbs, look around at your local dog parks. You simply will not see as many German Shepherds or Cattle Dogs, primarily because they're harder to manage in an inner-city environment. Of course, there'll always be a few, but you are more likely to notice smaller pure breeds along with "Oodle" and Maltese crossbreeds. It's true that you can manage some of those larger dogs in smaller spaces, but you will need to work harder at it – they need lots of exercise and plenty of company. Their size and energy levels are likely to need more effort and time from you.

If you have owned or lived with one of these larger breeds previously, you might like to consider a Poodle (or Labradoodle or other "Oodle" crossbred) – they are generally smart, active and trainable dogs. Cocker Spaniels or Shetland Sheepdogs (Shelties) might also be appealing. For the blokes who still want a solid, athletic type of dog, a Staffordshire Terrier might be worth considering. But bear in mind this breed does appreciate some outdoor space and needs plenty of company.

## small breeds and lap dogs

Small breeds can be handy if you're living in an apartment because they're less intrusive for others and can be carried through common areas. Breeds that might work well in an apartment include Bichon Frise, Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Chihuahua, Pug, French Bulldog, Maltese and Papillon.





What is interesting is that although people often can't imagine owning a small fluffy dog or other unfamiliar breed, once they live with the pet they fall in love with it and recognise its great qualities.

### giant breeds

Some of the larger breeds that can be good for inner-city lifestyles include Great Danes, Newfoundlands and Bernese Mountain Dogs. Remember though that these dogs are very large, eat huge amounts of food (this can be expensive and means they also produce large amounts of poo) and they are short-lived. They require a very dedicated owner who is able to cater to the specific needs of such a large dog.

### same, same but different

Often people can't imagine having a small or quiet breed of dog, but when they actually live with them they discover how easy they are to care for and are relieved at not having to spend hours every day exercising. And these dogs provide the same fantastic companionship that makes pet ownership such a great experience. Many people discover they develop a closer bond with their pet than they expected because they spend more time with them indoors.

It's important to understand that some of the breeds considered suitable for small spaces really do need to be indoor dogs. Cavalier King Charles Spaniels were bred to be companions and, as a result, are happiest indoors with their families. Whippets and Italian Greyhounds suffer from cold and Pugs, Bulldogs and French Bulldogs can suffer from both heat and cold. These breeds do much better indoors and are well suited to being city pets.

It's true that many people do manage to keep breeds and types of dogs in small spaces that might not generally be considered suitable. They are often able to do this because of the way they manage their pet, being prepared to modify their lifestyle and/or their surroundings to cater to the pet's needs. Whilst it's possible to do this, it's probably not ideal. To keep an energetic working breed of dog in a confined space, you have to be absolutely dedicated to undertaking very high amounts of daily exercise and providing adequate mental stimulation for the dog.

What's important is choosing a breed of dog to suit your lifestyle, not your apartment. Basically, if you spend most of your time working on the computer or watching television, you should be looking for a smaller dog with a placid temperament who wants to sit with you and keep you company. If you like power walking or jogging, you could be looking for a more athletic dog.

It is easier and safer to thoroughly consider your lifestyle and try to select an appropriate pet right from the start.

On page 45 (in the *dog breed choices* section) we provide you with more information to help you choose a dog breed to suit your lifestyle and on pages 46 – 49 (in the *10 dog breeds to consider* section) we profile selected dog breeds.

For more detailed information on dog breeds and more breed profiles, visit the *dogs* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).







# choosing the most suitable pet for your household

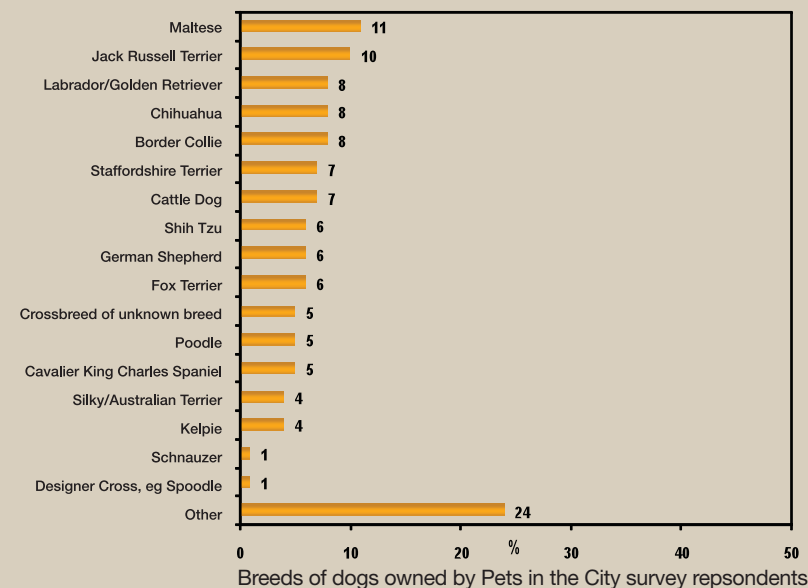
While there are great benefits from sharing your life with a pet, it's important to give serious consideration to your decision whether to get a dog or a cat and also to the breed within each species.

Dogs and cats have very different care requirements and also exhibit a huge range of behavioural variations between the various breeds. Different breeds within each species can range from excitable and friendly to laid back and aloof.

In this section we look at why some breeds are popular, whether a cat or a dog is more likely to be the most appropriate pet for you, the positives and negatives of keeping two cats or even a dog and a cat, adopting an older pet versus obtaining a puppy or kitten, and considerations such as hair shedding and size.



# In more recent times there seems to be an increased diversity in the choice of dog breeds and a prevalence of small and medium-sized dogs



## the most popular dog and cat breeds can change with the times

Over a decade ago the PIAS survey, the National People and Pets Report 1994, found German Shepherds were by far the most popular breed of dog at that time. The same survey conducted over a decade later revealed Maltese dogs were at the top of the list. This is a major shift as Maltese didn't even feature in the 1994 top 10 list!

Our research results for Pets in the City are consistent with these findings, showing that Maltese and Maltese crossbreeds are also the most popular breeds among higher density dwellers. In more recent times there seems to be an increased diversity in the choice of dog breeds and a prevalence of small and medium-sized dogs.

It would seem that people are making the shift to smaller dogs that may be easier to manage, need less exercise and be more suitable for small spaces.

So what type of dogs did our respondents keep? Plenty of smaller breeds including Chihuahua, Shih Tzu and Cavalier King Charles Spaniels appeared high on the list. But surprisingly, despite being large and reasonably energetic, Golden Retrievers were third highest and there were also working breeds like Border Collies and Cattle Dogs on the list. The respondents showed that overall they didn't have a huge amount of problems with their pets – remember they reported little difficulty and high levels of satisfaction. Owners also reported that 59% of dogs were purebred, the remainder crossbred.

And what about cats? Around half of our respondents classified Domestic Shorthair (also known as moggies) as their cat of choice. That's slightly less than other surveys which reveal that, unlike dogs where pure breeds are more popular, crossbreeds/moggies are generally more prevalent than purebred cats. The next most popular cat breeds nominated by our respondents were Siamese, followed by Burmese, Ragdoll, Persian and Abyssinian.

The range of breeds owned by the survey respondents shows that people manage to keep all sorts of breeds successfully. However, if you are thinking about getting a new pet it's definitely worth doing plenty of homework to determine the species and breed most likely to suit your lifestyle.

The following is some general information about species and breed or type selection and a range of other considerations. For information on key considerations and tips to help you choose an appropriate breed of dog to suit your lifestyle, go to page 45 (in the *dog breed choices* section). A selection of dog breeds is profiled on pages 46 – 49 (in the *10 dog breeds to consider* section). For more information and tips on cat breed selection, go to page 51 (in the *cat breed choices* section) and pages 52 – 55 (in the *10 cat breeds to consider* section).

For more detailed information on dog and cat breeds, and help with choosing a pet to suit your lifestyle, visit the *choosing the most suitable pet for your household* and *dogs and cats* sections at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).



## cats vs dogs

It seems that many of us have a definite tendency to be either “cat people” or “dog people” – often people who grew up with one species find it difficult to envisage owning the other. For that reason alone, many people who would like to have a dog but don’t feel they can in their current situation would not even consider getting a cat instead.

Often it’s only when a person ends up living with a cat, perhaps because it belongs to another person in the household, that they come to realise what fantastic pets cats can be – friendly, responsive and fun.

Cats can be a great pet choice for people with limited space and busy lifestyles. They don’t have the exercise requirements of a dog and they are very quiet and clean. Anyone who wants a pet but works long hours and spends little time at home should consider a cat or kitten. They are low maintenance and generally happy to be left alone and indoors.

Talk to friends or family members who own cats or maybe offer to house-sit for a cat owner when they go away. Perhaps visit a welfare shelter and spend some time with the kittens and cats – interacting with them may help you decide if you find their companionship appealing.

For people with children, a cat or kitten can be a great addition to the family. Cats can be very interactive with children and they offer the opportunity for children to care for another living being.

## two cats can be better than one

If your pet of choice is a cat, you may want to consider keeping two cats rather than one. Two cats will provide each other with constant companionship, without necessarily requiring much additional care and management. You do need to be prepared to cover extra costs such as veterinary bills. It’s also much easier if you decide on two cats from the start and they come into the house at the same time.

If you adopt two kittens, you’ll find they amuse each other with play and are less likely to become bored and mischievous than a solitary kitten. Kittens that are littermates will already be used to each other and likely to get along well. You may even be able to find two older cats that are looking for a home together. Occasionally people will need to re-house cats that have been accustomed to living together for a long period of time, and often they will have a preference for the cats to stay together.

## the truth about cats and dogs

While it’s relatively easy to provide extra companionship by keeping two cats, dog owners are faced with a slightly more difficult situation. It’s entirely reasonable that working owners should feel some concern for how their dogs will cope with being left alone for over eight hours per day. Dogs are not solitary animals – they enjoy companionship, both human and animal. Although some breeds and individual dogs seem to cope better at being alone than others, generally speaking dogs are very social.

# tips for successfully keeping dogs and cats together

- Ideally, you should acquire your dog and cat at the same time and when they are both young. This will help them get used to each other at a time when both can establish regular patterns and routines as well as socialise with each other – meaning there may be fewer fights about who gets to lie next to the heater on those cold winter nights.
- Research suggests you are more likely to be successful introducing a dog to a household where a cat is the first occupant, rather than introducing a cat into a household that already has a dog.
- If you have a pet that has been a part of your life for some time, it's best to introduce the new pet to the established pet very gradually and under supervision.
- When you first bring home your new pet, put them in a room behind a closed door for a few days so that your other pet can get to know the new arrival “through the door” and with minimal confrontation. This way your pets will discover each other through smell and hearing so when you introduce them face-to-face they will already be familiar with each other.
- When introducing a cat and a dog, people usually worry that the cat will come off second best, but keep an eye out for the dog as well! Cats like to establish that they are the boss from the first meeting – even if that means running away after delivering a quick swipe to a dog's nose.
- It's sensible to remember that, in many ways, pets are like children. If you are paying too much attention to one pet, there can be competition. Distribute your affection to both in a structured way and make sure that both pets know what the rules are for getting attention – being calm and sitting patiently.

Keeping two dogs in a limited space may not be a sensible solution to the companionship issue – two dogs can place heavy demands on time, budget and space. An alternative is to consider raising a puppy and kitten together.

Potential pet owners might think it is difficult to keep the peace in a household with a cat and dog, but dogs and cats can live together happily and become great companions, especially if they are acquired at the same time. The younger dogs and cats are when they are first introduced the better, because then they have the opportunity to grow together and become familiar with each other from the outset.

If you're considering keeping a cat and dog in the same household, keep in mind that there are some breeds of dogs that aren't generally recommended as being suitable to be kept with cats.

For more information on keeping two cats and keeping cats and dogs together, visit the *two cats are better than one* and the *truth about cats and dogs* sections at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## indoor pets – a hairy consideration

As dogs move out of the backyard and into the house, hair shedding and cleanliness become increasingly important. Our research showed hair shedding was the number one problem for people who own a dog or cat in smaller spaces. Cat owners had more of a problem with hair shedding than dog owners. When our dogs and cats lived primarily outdoors they could shed hair like crazy and it rarely mattered. These days, with pets spending more time indoors, and particularly those living in the city and/or apartments, it clearly has the potential to be a major concern.

It's no coincidence that many of the dog breeds considered suitable for small spaces are non or low shedding. Some dog breeds are said to have no shedding at all – but be aware that these dogs all need regular grooming and/or clipping to maintain their long, fine coats: Bedlington Terriers, Bichon Frise, Lhasa Apso, Maltese, Poodles, Schnauzers, Shih Tzus and Yorkshire Terriers.

Low-shedding dog breeds include Australian Silky Terriers, Australian Terriers, Basenji, Cairn Terriers, Chinese Crested Dogs, Scottish Terriers and West Highland White Terriers. Chihuahuas, Whippets, Greyhounds and Italian Greyhounds all shed hair but their fine coats mean less hair and little grooming. Some of the designer “Oodle” crossbreeds are non or low-shedding, but not all. If you want a non or low-shedding crossbred you should discuss this with the breeder.







Devon and Cornish Rex cats have very sparse coats and as a consequence shed far less hair than other cat breeds. The coat length of cat breeds can range from short through to long, and they will typically shed hair and require grooming relative to their coat length – the longer the coat, the more regular grooming will be required.

On page 88 (in the *common problems and tips to help you solve them* section) we provide you with tips to help manage hair shedding.

For more information on low-shedding dog and cat breeds, visit the *indoor pets – a hairy consideration* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## re-homing an older dog or cat vs puppies and kittens

Obtaining a purebred puppy or kitten from a registered breeder is an excellent way to find the perfect pet, but don't forget crossbred dogs and cats and rescue animals are also available. Sometimes re-homing a more mature pet can be a great choice.

People often assume that the pets that end up in rescue shelters or advertised privately for re-homing must be unwanted or badly behaved. In fact there are many reasons why owners may need to re-home their pet: the owner may be relocating overseas; the owner may have died, been hospitalised or is moving into a nursing home; the owners may have divorced and neither party is able to keep the pet; the owners may not have time for or be able to afford to keep the pet; or, as already covered in this guide, the owner may be moving to an apartment building that doesn't allow pets. In many cases, owners are broken-hearted to be giving up a much-loved pet and will go to great lengths to ensure that they end up in an appropriate home.

There are many benefits to re-homing an older dog or cat. You're not starting from scratch with a more mature dog. When you get a puppy, you're essentially bringing a baby animal into your home – they are untrained, unsocialised, they will most likely cry at night, mess on the floor and chew things they shouldn't. Kittens generally will already use a litter tray but they're still going to be more bouncy and rowdy than an older cat.

Rescue dogs will generally have been indoors at some stage in their past, so they should have at least basic manners and toilet training. Older cats are more likely to be content being alone – a good match for someone who has an active lifestyle. Older pets should also already be desexed, microchipped and vaccinated, so will have fewer “start-up” costs.

Most importantly, when you obtain an older pet, what you see is what you get. A puppy or kitten's demeanour and behaviour will still be developing until they reach maturity, so it can be hard to tell what type of disposition they might have. When you adopt an older pet, their personality and behaviour should be evident.

When selecting a mature dog or cat it can be helpful to know the background of the animal. In many cases, owners can provide a lot of information about the way their pet behaves and has been kept to assist in finding the animal the most suitable home. If you live in a smaller space, ideally you would find a dog or cat that has already been happily kept primarily indoors or in a smaller space.



Don't forget crossbred dogs, cats and rescue animals are also available. Sometimes re-homing a more mature pet can be a great choice.

There are many reliable animal welfare shelters and rescue groups operating around Australia. Look for one that undertakes behavioural assessments of all animals and only makes pets with sound health and temperament available for adoption.

Many shelters and rescue organisations run foster programs where pets are put into the temporary care of a foster home while they're waiting to find a new, permanent owner. Fostering can be an excellent way of introducing a pet into your life. For people who may be getting over the loss of a beloved pet, fostering can provide an opportunity to once again experience the joys of pet ownership while helping a homeless pet find a new family.

On pages 56 – 59 (in the *how much is that doggy in the window?* section) you will find more information on where to get a pet. For more information on registered breeders, pet shops, shelters and adoption services, visit the *best places for you to find a pet* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

### size can be misleading

If you are thinking of getting a dog for your apartment, the most important consideration is to understand their energy and noise levels. It is true that some smaller dogs, such as the Pekingese, were bred specifically to be pampered indoor pets, but many small breeds have endless energy and need a lot of attention and exercise. Some dogs – such as Jack Russell Terriers – can also be quite vocal and may not be well suited to apartment living.

Many people firmly believe that it's impossible to have a large dog without a huge backyard, which is simply not true. Consider dogs that are kept for breeding, racing and other purposes – they're generally housed in kennels with runs. These facilities are usually quite limited in space and the dogs, if managed correctly, do perfectly well living in such conditions. Bear in mind though that large and giant breeds of dogs will require more food, will cost more to feed and will produce much more waste.

Smaller dogs can be easier to handle in the city, especially if they're a size that can be easily carried. People generally seem to be less intimidated by a dog that's being carried. Being able to pick up your dog and carry it through a foyer and into a lift can be an advantage for high-rise apartment dwellers.

### dogs and kids

Don't forget to think about the needs of everyone in the household now and into the future. If you have children, or are planning to start a family, you might want to consider a "softer" breed of dog. That is to say a dog that doesn't have huge amounts of prey or herding drive and is gentle. Smaller dogs are also often easier to manage with small children. There's a wealth of information available about managing dogs and children to prevent dog bites. For more information on dogs and kids, visit the *dogs and kids* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## Dr Katrina Warren – Veterinarian and Television Presenter

Sharing my life with pets has always been a great joy to me. We know that the number one reason a person gets a pet is that they spontaneously fall in love with them. This can happen anywhere from a pound or shelter, a breeder's premises, the internet or a pet shop window. In the best cases, this comes after proper research on what sort of pet is suited to your lifestyle. Falling in love with a pet is one thing, committing to their needs is what really matters.

When you take into account the broad range of pet species and all the different breeds within each species, there are a multitude of pet choices available. Think carefully about your lifestyle now and into the future. Do plenty of research and consider your options carefully. You'll be rewarded with a lifetime of love and companionship.



Katrina & Burmilla kitten

# expert comment

### fish, birds and other pets

This guide focuses on the selection, care and management of dogs and cats; they are certainly the most popular pets, regardless of whether people live in high, medium or low-density housing. However, our pet owning survey respondents did keep other pets, with 15% keeping fish, 10% keeping birds and 4% keeping "other" pets.

Fish and birds have long been popular in Australia, but a wide range of other pets are also available – mice, rats, rabbits, guinea pigs and ferrets can all be kept successfully with limited space. More recently, reptiles and some native animals are permitted to be kept; some species require licences.

Remember that while all pets need consistent care and attention, some species have very specific care requirements, requiring a high level of expertise, and are really more suited to enthusiasts.

For more information on birds, fish and other pets, visit the *choosing the right pet for your household* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

### selectapet

The PIAS Selectapet program can help take the guesswork out of choosing a dog or cat. Selectapet is a computer program that provides insights into the most appropriate breeds of dog and cat to suit your lifestyle. The program is available on-line and is free of charge. Would-be pet owners answer a series of questions about their lifestyle, and the program then analyses that data, suggests four possible dog or cat breeds and provides information on those breeds. Users can vary their preferences in terms of size, coat length and other factors to obtain a wide range of information.

Selectapet will help get you thinking about the key considerations when choosing a dog or cat. But of course it's still very important to undertake your own research and talk to other people such as friends, vets and breeders about dog and cat breeds before making a decision. It can

also be a good idea to attend a dog or cat show where a mix of breeds are on display – it's a great opportunity to see and meet different types of dogs and cats and talk to the handlers about the characteristics of that breed.

To try out the free Selectapet service, visit the Selectapet section on the PIAS website – [www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au).







Ruby, Leo & Joey

## case study

# two pugs are more fun than one

When Joey and Fiona originally bought their ground-floor apartment in the inner-Sydney suburb of Glebe, the building by-laws only permitted pets that were already owned by residents; new pets weren't allowed and pets couldn't be replaced. Soon after they moved in, there was a move to change the by-laws to permit the keeping of dogs and cats. Joey and Fiona were among a majority of residents who voted in favour of the change and the block became pet-friendly.

The young couple then began the hunt for a suitable dog. They knew they wanted a small and quiet dog, so Fiona started to do some research, including using the on-line service Selectapet. "I saw a Pug-cross in a pet shop. We had heard a little bit about Pugs, so I started to look into them more carefully," says Fiona. "We chatted to anyone we met who had Pugs and found that every owner absolutely gushed about how much they loved the breed."

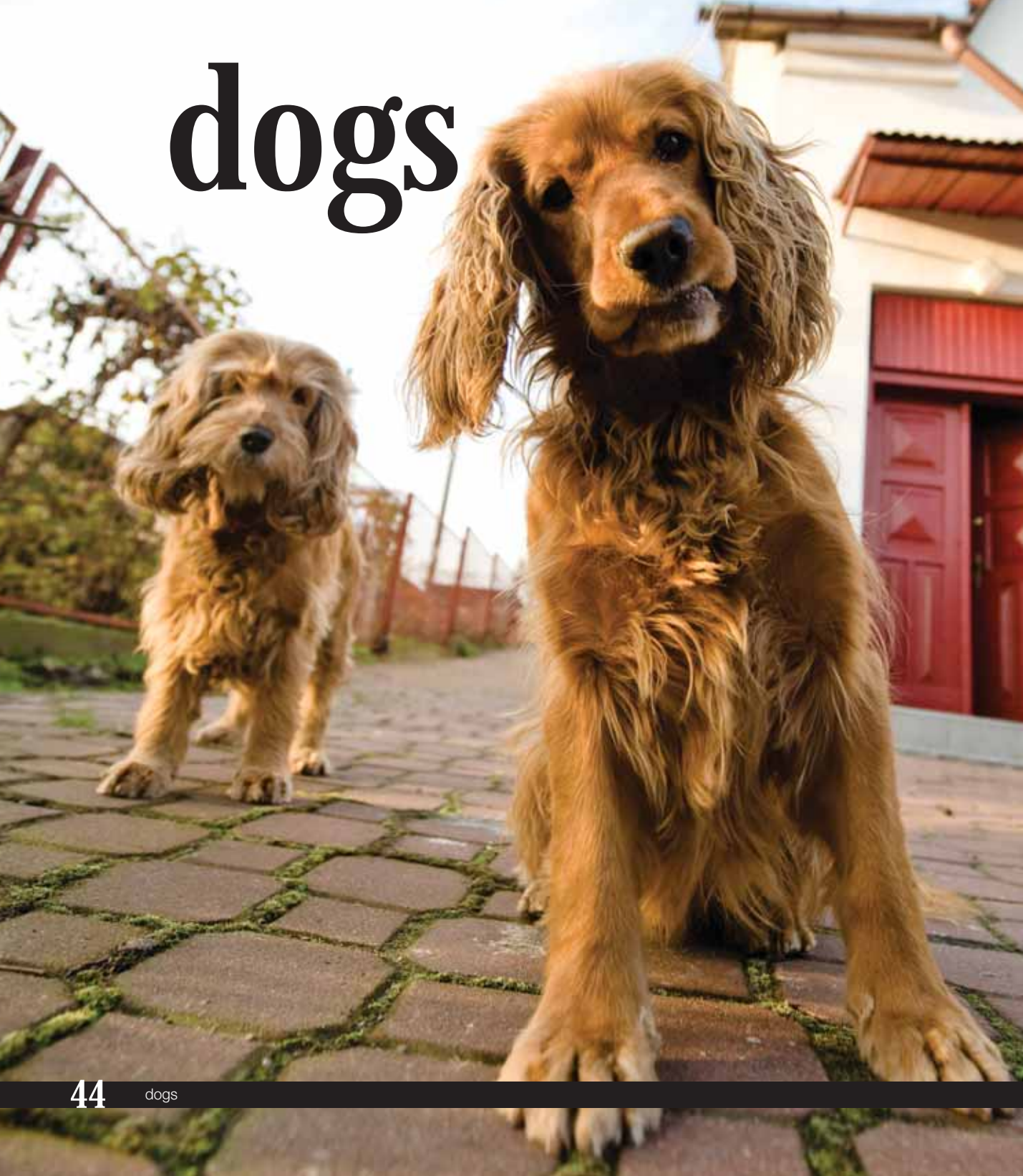
Joey and Fiona located a breeder through the Pug Dog Club and talked with them on the phone several times. It came as no surprise when they learned that Pugs can be prone to breathing difficulties and occasional knee problems, but the couple felt reassured by the breeder. Three months after originally deciding to get a dog Joey and Fiona received the call they'd been waiting for: a litter was available and they could come and choose a puppy.

Ruby, a delightful black female Pug, became part of the household. After four months of owning Ruby, the couple realised that she was very much a companion dog and they really didn't like leaving her alone. Despite both working flexible hours, inevitably there were times when Ruby was solo, so they went back to the same breeder and Leo, a fawn-coloured male, joined the family.

"Toilet training is important when you live in an apartment," explains Fiona. "We're lucky to have a generous outdoor area and a doggy door so the Pugs can go in and out as they please, but I suspect they spend most of their time inside when we're not here." Fiona comments that they find it easy to have the two dogs. "The Pugs have turned out to be a great choice for us. They're terrific company for each other, they share the same bed by choice. There is a lot of hair though and it can get a little crazy when they really get going."

When the couple need to go away, a relative minds the apartment and the dogs. Otherwise Fiona and Joey take Ruby and Leo everywhere with them. Fiona firmly believes they experience their local area a lot more because of the dogs – they spend a great deal of time out walking, exploring and simply enjoying their location.

# dogs



## dog breed choices

To a certain extent, the behaviour and characteristics of many purebred dogs can be predicted. However, all dogs are individuals and their behaviour can still vary greatly within the breed.

It can be difficult to determine the exact breeding of some crossbred dogs. Without sighting both parents, making a judgement on the breed may be pure guesswork. Sometimes crossbred dogs will look like a particular breed and behave in a very different way. Viewing a crossbred puppy's parents can be a great help, not only in confirming the breed but also in determining how the puppy might behave when mature and what size it will grow to.

It's particularly important not to choose a dog on the basis of appearance or because you saw it in a movie – a dog's appearance can be deceiving and the behaviour depicted in movies can be far removed from how they behave in real life!

Consider the key aspects of your lifestyle and the characteristics of various dog breeds before making a final decision. And finally, while you want a dog that meets your needs, you also need to ask yourself: can you meet the dog's needs? Dogs are social, living creatures that deserve to be cared for and loved by responsible owners. They need all the obvious things like food and shelter, but importantly they also need companionship.



# tips for choosing a dog to suit your lifestyle

- Room to Move - *where you live and your outdoor space*

You need to have room to keep a dog. It is fine to have a small or even no yard and keep a dog primarily indoors, but you have to be realistic. Choose an appropriate breed and have a plan as to how you will manage it. Consider where the dog will sleep and where he will be exercised.

- Safe and Sound - *whether you can keep a dog secure on your property*

You must be able to keep a dog secure to prevent him from roaming. Some dogs are great climbers and diggers, and you need to ensure your fences are adequate to contain the type of dog you're considering.

- Fit and Healthy - *how much daily exercise your dog will receive*

Be realistic: this means how long you will walk your dog, even in winter and when it's raining...every day.

- Permission Granted - *whether you are permitted to keep a dog where you live*

Dogs are prohibited in some strata developments and rental accommodation, so you need to ensure you have permission to keep a dog and be confident that you're likely to be permitted to keep the dog if you move from that premises to another.

- Time and Space - *how much time your dog will be alone each day*

Dogs are social animals and need company. If you're not going to be able to spend time with your dog, perhaps you should consider having an additional pet, an alternative pet or no pet at all. If you spend a lot of time away from home, it's important you allow

the dog to spend time indoors with you when you are home. Dogs that are left outside on their own all the time are more likely to become bored and a nuisance. The more time you spend with your dog, the stronger and more rewarding a bond you are likely to develop.

- Mix of People and Pets - *whether you have children or elderly people in your home*

Young children should always be supervised around dogs. The young and the elderly generally don't mix well with large and boisterous dogs that have the potential to frighten them and knock them over.

- Type and Temperament - *how active you are and how energetic should your dog be*

Some people love a dog that's always excited and keen for a walk; others prefer a dog that's relaxed and calm. If you're living in a high-density environment, you want to avoid dogs that are likely to be yappy and noisy.

- Care and Grooming - *how much you are willing to spend feeding and caring for your dog*

Large and giant breeds naturally consume more food, and you need to be confident that you can afford it. Other day-to-day and unexpected costs also need to be budgeted for. Coat length will influence how much grooming you'll have to do – dogs with longer coats generally require more grooming. Consider how much time you're prepared to spend on this task and whether you're happier with a dog that needs to be groomed daily or less frequently. Some breeds are said to be non-shedding (Poodles, Bichon Frise, Bedlington

Terriers, Lhasa Apso, Maltese, Schnauzers, Shih Tzus, Yorkshire Terriers and some of the new "Oodle" crosses) but these breeds require regular clipping and this is an additional expense to consider.

- Use the free Selectapet program to help with your decision. Visit the Selectapet information on the PIAS website – [www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au).





# 10 breeds to consider



## australian terrier

### size

23–28 cm, 4–6 kg

### personality

Cheeky, energetic, loyal, intelligent, amusing, feisty and self-confident.

### coat care

Wirehaired with low shedding. Brush weekly; bath monthly. Trim around eyes and ears if necessary.

### health care

Generally hardy.

### best for

Adults or families with older children. Tolerant with other pets but may have a tendency to chase small pets. A good watchdog and may bark if bored. Consistent training and socialisation brings out the Australian Terrier's best.

### in small spaces

A small dog with moderate to high levels of activity, the Australian Terrier suits apartment living with a daily short walk. Its low-shedding coat is an advantage for indoor living.



## bichon frise

### size

23–31 cm, 3–6 kg

### personality

Lively, alert, independent, affectionate, bold, cheerful and sociable.

### coat care

Longhaired with very low shedding. Brush once or twice weekly, clip/groom every 4 weeks and bath monthly. May be preferred by people with allergies.

### health care

Eyes should be wiped frequently. May be prone to genetic diseases that can be screened for by breeders.

### best for

Adults, families with children and elderly people. Placid and easily trained, although persistence with housetraining is often needed. Some are good watchdogs while others are quiet.

### in small spaces

Quite active inside and moderately active outdoors, the Bichon Frise is small enough to burn off some energy indoors but requires a daily short walk. It is a companion dog and enjoys the indoor life where its low-shedding coat is an advantage.



## boston terrier

### size

38–43 cm, 4–11 kg

### personality

Friendly, lively, tolerant, intelligent, companionable, loyal and gentle.

### coat care

Smooth coated with average shedding. Brush and bath only as necessary.

### health care

Short muzzle may cause breathing problems that are worsened by overexertion or heat. Prominent eyes are susceptible to injury. This breed is known for its snorting and snoring.

### best for

Adults, families with children and elderly people. Gets along well with other pets. Usually barks only when necessary. Responsive to firm and consistent training, although persistence with housetraining may be needed.

### in small spaces

The Boston Terrier prefers the indoor life, which suits its low activity. It is moderately active outdoors. A daily short walk is recommended.



## cavalier king charles spaniel

### size

30–33 cm, 5–8 kg

### personality

Sporting, affectionate, fearless, friendly, tolerant and companionable.

### coat care

Longhaired with average shedding. Brush weekly, trim feet occasionally and bath as necessary.

### health care

Prone to weight gain; do not overfeed. Intolerant of very hot weather. This breed is known for its snoring and may be prone to genetic diseases that can be screened for by breeders.

### best for

Adults, families with children and elderly people. Confident with strangers and gets along well with other pets. Quiet and readily trained.

### in small spaces

The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel prefers indoor living, where it is quiet, with low to medium activity. A daily short walk is recommended.



## chihuahua

### size

15–23 cm, 1–3 kg

### personality

Alert, spirited, lively, bold, strong-willed and playful.

### coat care

Smooth coated or longhaired with average shedding. Groom or wipe down smooth coat occasionally and groom long coat daily. Bath monthly.

### health care

Intolerant of cold weather. Prominent eyes are susceptible to injury. Eyes should be wiped regularly.

### best for

Adults and elderly people. Fragile and easily dropped, so may not be ideal as a pet for children or in a household with large, boisterous animals. Often devoted to a single person, the Chihuahua can be timid with strangers or other animals but has a surprisingly loud bark and makes an attentive watchdog. Consistent, patient training and good socialisation can reduce nervousness. May need persistence with housetraining.

### in small spaces

The Chihuahua is a tiny dog best suited to an indoor life. It is moderately active inside and outdoors, and requires a daily short walk.



## french bulldog

### size

30 cm, 10–13 kg

### personality

Courageous, comical, vivacious, affectionate, intelligent, curious and alert.

### coat care

Smooth coated with average shedding. Brush and bath only as necessary.

### health care

Short muzzle may cause breathing problems that are worsened by overexertion or heat. Intolerant of very hot or cold weather. Prominent eyes are susceptible to injury. Eyes and skin folds around muzzle must be cleaned frequently. Snoring and snorting is not uncommon.

### best for

Adults, families with older children and elderly people. Thrives on companionship so prefers not to be left alone. Gets along well with other pets. Quiet and responsive to consistent training.

### in small spaces

The compact French Bulldog is quiet, with low to medium activity inside and outdoors. Requires a daily short walk.



## greyhound

### size

68–76 cm, 27–32 kg

### personality

Intelligent, gentle, affectionate, even tempered, elegant, sensitive and friendly.

### coat care

Smooth coated with average shedding. Brush or wipe down and bath only when necessary.

### health care

Intolerant of cold weather.

### best for

Adults or families with gentle children. Tolerant of other quiet dogs, although a few will tend to chase cats or small pets. Placid and responds well to gentle training.

### in small spaces

For a large dog, the Greyhound is notably quiet and gentle inside, with low activity levels, although very active outdoors. Requires a daily medium-length walk and enjoys safe off-lead running.



## poodle

### size

**standard** over 38 cm, 20–31 kg

**miniature** 25–38 cm, 7–8 kg

**toy under** 25 cm, 3–4 kg

### personality

Active, intelligent, cheerful, lively and sensitive; Standard Poodles may be more sedate than the smaller varieties.

### coat care

Longhaired with very low shedding. Clip every 6 weeks and bath regularly. May be preferred by people with allergies.

### health care

Eyes should be wiped frequently. Ears should be checked for wax or excess hair. Poodles are prone to several genetic conditions that may be screened for by breeders.

### best for

Singles, families and elderly people. Will often bond to a single person in the household. Tolerant with other pets and gentle children. Highly intelligent and very trainable, the Poodle needs good socialisation to avoid nervousness, especially for Toy Poodles. Poodles are dedicated watchdogs.

### in small spaces

With moderate to high levels of activity (Toy Poodles are the most energetic), the Poodle is also quiet inside and outdoors. Its low-shedding coat is an advantage for indoor living. Requires a daily medium-length walk (Standard and Miniature) or short walk (Toy).



## pug

### size

25–28 cm, 6–9 kg.

### personality

Quiet, alert, affectionate, patient, sturdy, devoted and playful.

### coat care

Smooth coated with average and seasonally heavy shedding. Brush and bath only as necessary.

### health care

Prone to weight gain; do not overfeed. Short muzzle may cause breathing problems that are worsened by overexertion or heat. Intolerant of very hot or cold weather. Prominent eyes are susceptible to injury. Eyes and skin folds around muzzle must be cleaned frequently. This breed is known for its snoring and snorting.

### best for

Adults, families with children and elderly people. Gets along well with other pets. Not a great barker but quite a vocal dog. Firm but gentle training is needed.

### in small spaces

The Pug is a small, quiet dog with low activity levels inside. It is best suited to an indoor life. Requires a daily short walk.



## whippet

### size

44–56 cm, 11–21 kg

### personality

Intelligent, lively, affectionate, sweet, docile, sensitive, quiet and adaptable.

### coat care

Smooth coated with average shedding. Brush or wipe down and bath only when necessary.

### health care

Generally hardy. Intolerant of cold weather.

### best for

Adults, families with gentle children or active elderly people. Gets along well with most other dogs; tolerant of cats if socialised at a young age. Responds well to training.

### in small spaces

The Whippet is small and quiet, with low activity levels inside, but can be very active outdoors. Requires a daily medium-length walk and enjoys safe off-lead running.



## other breeds to consider

With the Australian National Kennel Council recognising almost 200 breed standards for purebred dogs in Australia, there is certainly a multitude of dog breeds worthy of consideration for city living. For a further 10 dog breed profiles and links to information on many other breeds and breed standards, visit the *dogs* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

The breeds listed here are suggestions only, developed in close consultation with dog experts. They have been selected as being better suited to living in apartments and townhouses. Please note, however, that the selections are based on Australian city lifestyles and the selected breeds are a guide only. Your final selection of a pet should only be made after consultation with breeders or shelter staff, and your own careful assessment of the pet's suitability for your lifestyle. We undertake no liability and give no warranty in relation to the selected breed.



## Dr Katrina Warren – Veterinarian and Television Presenter

Dogs make fantastic companions; they're loyal, intelligent, fun and loving. There are many practical barriers to owning a dog and I think it's really important to thoroughly consider your lifestyle before deciding whether you are ready to commit to owning a dog and which type of dog is most suitable for you. Consider fully the costs in terms of time and money, as well as the practicalities of accommodating, exercising, grooming and generally managing a dog.

Don't place too much emphasis on a dog's appearance; what's more important is their temperament and activity levels. There's no hard and fast rule about selection but be sensible – don't buy a working breed if you don't like to exercise and you're never home, and don't buy a lap dog if you want a long-distance running companion.



Katrina & Dalmatian puppy

# expert comment



### crossbreeds and “designer” dogs

As the name suggests, these are dogs of mixed breed parentage. Mixed breed dogs usually show a blend of the characteristics of each parent, so check that you like the personality and temperament of both the original breeds. Even within a single litter, some puppies are more like the mother and others more like the father, which influences traits such as coat length, grooming required, amount of shedding and personality. The adult size can also be variable but the parent breeds will give a guide.

Mixed breed dogs are considered to have a lower risk of inherited diseases than pure-bred dogs, although health problems from the parents may still be passed on, and many breeders screen their breeding stock for problems. The breeding of mixed breed dogs is less regulated in Australia than breeding purebred dogs, so finding a reputable breeder is important.

Mixed breed dogs range from accidental litters to the carefully engineered breeding of “designer” dogs that aim to result in the best characteristics of each breed. The former are often very inexpensive, but the latter may cost as much, if not more, than many purebred dogs. Some of the more popular crosses include Maltese/Shih Tzu, Labrador/Poodle (Labradoodle), Pug/Cavalier King Charles Spaniel (Puglier), Cocker Spaniel/Poodle (Spoodle) and Poodle/Cavalier King Charles Spaniel (Cavoodle).



# cats



## cat breed choices

The breed of cat you choose will influence the amount and type of care required by your feline friend. Like dogs, different cat breeds have individual character traits and care requirements. Some breeds such as the Burmese are friendly and almost dog-like, whilst Siamese are known for being quite vocal. Abyssinians can be extremely active, whilst Persians are real couch potatoes but require a huge amount of grooming for their long, impressive coats. Rex cats don't shed hair and are sometimes preferred by owners with allergies.

It's a good idea to research the type of cat that is best suited to your lifestyle. Whether you opt for a purebred or a moggie, it's important that you find a well-socialised cat; a kitten that turns up on your doorstep may need a lot of expert care if it is timid or not well socialised.

If your cat will not have any access to the outdoors, it's a good idea to try to select a breed or individual that's predisposed to indoor living. It's much easier to live with a cat that loves the great indoors.

Information on pet species selection, keeping two cats and keeping cats and dogs together successfully can be found on pages 36 – 43 (in the *choosing the most suitable pet for your household* section).

## Bambi Edwards – International All-Breeds Cat Judge

I've always recommend to folk who are considering purchasing a kitten to attend a cat show and observe all the breeds on show. They can discuss the different breeds with registered cat breeders, and understand the responsibility of cat ownership.

It's imperative that you choose a breed that will fit into your lifestyle and that you like that type of cat, as you are committed for up to the next 15 – 20 years with your feline friend.

You must be prepared to keep the cat indoors for its own safety or provide enclosed outdoor accommodation with access from the home. Cats can provide incredible companionship – and remember, the cat's attitude will reflect your and your family's personality.

expert comment



Bambi Edwards & Lovelace

## tips for choosing a cat to suit your lifestyle

- What sort of household do you have? If everyone in the house is out during the day at school or work, it may be a good idea to have two cats as they can help keep each other company.
- Where will your cat live? Will your cat be kept only indoors or allowed out at times? If your cat will be kept entirely or mostly indoors, it's a good idea to select a breed or an individual that's calm and not very active.
- What sort of cat do you want? Cats come in a range of sizes, coat types and personalities. You should consider your preferred build, coat and nature. Breeds and individuals range from small boned to large in size, short or curly coated through to longhair, and gentle through to playful or independent. Coat length is particularly important, as this will affect the impact of shedding in your home and determine how much grooming you will have to do.
- There is a cat to suit every household, so do your research on the different breeds and don't forget to consider a moggie from a good home. A good place to start is the Selectapet information on the PIAS website – [www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au).





# 10 breeds to consider



## birman

### personality

Sweet-natured, intelligent, devoted, placid and quiet.

### activity level

Quiet; enjoys owner interaction.

### other pets

Good with other cats and cat-friendly dogs, prefers a companion if left alone.

### regular care

Long coat – groom 2 to 3 times weekly.

### suits

An indoor life; singles, couples or families with children.



## british shorthair

### personality

Placid, a dignified and tolerant cat, quiet, intelligent and undemanding.

### activity level

Quiet; sleeps a lot and not inclined to wander.

### other pets

Tolerant of other pets.

### regular care

Short coat – groom weekly.

### suits

An indoor life; singles, couples or families with children.



## burmese

### personality

Friendly, inquisitive, outgoing, dog-like, alert, strong-minded, playful and talkative.

### activity level

Active; may be trained to walk on a lead or retrieve; enjoys owner interaction.

### other pets

Confident with other pets, prefers a companion if left alone.

### regular care

Short coat – groom weekly.

### suits

All ages, including families with children.



## devon and cornish rex

### personality

Energetic, intelligent, mischievous and dog-like.

### activity level

Active and playful; enjoys playing games and owner interaction.

### other pets

Tolerant of gentle pets.

### regular care

Minimal shedding sparse coat – occasional brushing or wipe down.

### suits

Attentive owners, active households of all ages, including families with children.



## maine coon

### personality

Gentle, loyal, loving, intelligent, sociable and vocal.

### activity level

Moderate; may be trained to walk on a leash; enjoys interaction with owners and water play.

### other pets

Confident with other pets.

### regular care

Long coat – groom 2 to 3 times weekly.

### suits

Family life, including families with children.



## ragdoll

### personality

People-oriented, sweet, docile and relaxed.

### activity level

Active and playful; may be trained to walk on a lead or retrieve; enjoys owner interaction.

### other pets

Sociable with other pets.

### regular care

Long coat – groom every second day.

### suits

An indoor environment; good with children.



## russian blue

### personality

Gentle, reserved, elegant, intelligent and sensitive and quiet.

### activity level

Moderately active; playful but not highly active, prefers indoor environment.

### other pets

Prefers cats of a similar temperament and quiet dogs.

### regular care

Short coat – groom weekly.

### suits

A tranquil indoor life, with adults or families with quiet children.



## siamese

### personality

Intelligent, extroverted, demanding, noisy, devoted and affectionate.

### activity level

Highly energetic and active; owner interaction essential.

### other pets

Accepts other pets if accustomed from an early age.

### regular care

Short coat – groom weekly.

### suits

Devoted adult households or those with gentle children; often bonds to a single person.



### other cat breeds to consider

There are many cat breeds available in Australia. For a further 10 cat breed profiles and links to information on many other breeds, visit the [cats](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au) section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## tonkinese

### personality

Intelligent, inquisitive, dog-like, calm, sociable, loyal, stubborn and talkative.

### activity level

Active and agile; enjoys climbing; responds well to basic training.

### other pets

Confident with other pets, prefers a companion if left alone.

### regular care

Short coat – groom weekly.

### suits

An attentive owner; singles, couples or families with children.

## domestic shorthair/longhair

The Domestic, or “moggie”, is the most common variety of cat in Australia. Unlike the pedigreed cat, the Domestic has no defined parentage and so this is the most diverse grouping of cats. Domestic cats come in every colour and coat length, and their personalities range from timid to extremely confident, and from highly active to couch potatoes.

As early as the 19th century, organised studies and individual opinion linked coat colour to temperament. For example, tortoiseshell cats are frequently said to be temperamental, white cats timid and black and white cats outgoing. While popular opinion may support these generalisations, the diversity of the Domestic means that just as many individuals do not fit the pattern.

With such diverse breeding, it may be difficult to predict the final personality in a young kitten. The way a kitten is socialised and its early experiences can contribute to its adult behaviour, so many cat owners like to start “from scratch” with a young kitten. When personality, rather than appearance, is of primary importance, selecting an older cat – from five months onward or even an adult cat – may allow more accurate personality assessment.

Regardless of temperament, the Domestic is a popular and hardy cat, untroubled by most of the inherited health problems that selective breeding can create in some purebred cats.



## Brian Edwards – Waratah National Cat Alliance

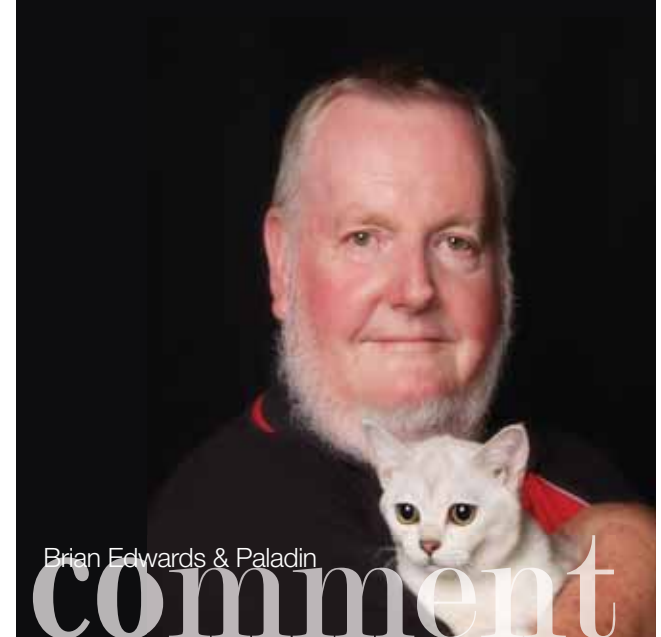
I believe that in most situations cats will adapt to their environment, but you must have a cat that is content in their environment. Couch potatoes are happy with a soft bed or lap; however, some activity is always pleasant, particularly if children are part of the environment.

Burmese fit in anywhere and Maine Coons are great – I have friends who spend up to four months a year travelling Australia in a caravan with four Maine Coons, and a happier bunch of cats and people you would be lucky to meet. I also know of two Burmese that are 24/7 living on a sailing boat and they have a great time.

Discuss your environment with other cat owners in similar situations. Visit them and watch the cat's attitude; if it is enjoying its environment then maybe consider that breed. Research all your friends and acquaintances to feel comfortable with your choice.

We need to remember that the more we invest in our pets' lives, the easier it is to incorporate them into ours.

expert




Brian Edwards & Paladin

comment



The breeds listed here are suggestions only, developed in close consultation with cat experts. They have been selected as being better suited to living in apartments and townhouses. Please note, however, that the selections are based on Australian city lifestyles and the selected breeds are a guide only. Your final selection of a pet should only be made after consultation with breeders or shelter staff, and your own careful assessment of the pet's suitability for your lifestyle. We undertake no liability and give no warranty in relation to the selected breed.





# how much is that doggy in the window?

## where people get their pets

So where do people get their pets? We asked the pet owners in our survey where they found their pet, and learned that the most common sources of pets were pet shops (20%), animal shelters (14%), sources recommended by family and friends (14%), breeders (13%), newspaper advertisements (8%) and internet research (6%).

The majority of owners experienced little difficulty in obtaining their dog or cat; however, 12% of dog owners and 5% of cat owners indicated that it was a difficult process. In most instances, this was because they had to travel a long distance to get the pet or the breed wasn't easily available.

# tips to help you find your new pet

- Be prepared to wait to find the right pet. Some of the more unusual breeds may not be readily available, and you may need to contact a few breeders and perhaps be placed on a waiting list. Shelters may not have the most appropriate pet for you to adopt when you visit, so you may need to return when a suitable pet becomes available.
- Be prepared to travel to find the right pet – the best pet for you may not be in your local neighbourhood. It's important that you meet the pet before purchase, so travel may be required.
- If possible, see the puppy or kitten in the place where it was born, preferably while they are still with their mother. Ensure the place is clean and the puppies and kittens behave in a friendly manner with people and other animals.
- When buying a puppy or kitten, it's important that you are confident they come from a responsible breeder. Responsible breeders:
  - Provide a high standard of care for their pets
  - Breed healthy pets free from genetic disorders
  - Ensure pets are friendly and socialised
  - Only sell puppies and kittens from eight weeks of age
- Will make sure the pet is suitable for you and that you will provide a good home for the pet
- Provide information on the handling and care requirements of the pet
- Provide a guarantee, cooling-off period or refund.
- When adopting a mature pet, try to find out as much as you can about the history of the pet. This may help you understand how the pet is likely to behave and indicate whether you can provide the right home for that pet.

## the best places for you to find a pet

Clearly there are many different sources of dogs and cats in Australia. Where you eventually find your new best friend may be influenced by the type, breed and age of pet you want. Ideally you should purchase a pet from a source where you can be confident the pet will be friendly and healthy; and one that provides you with information and support to help you understand the care needs of the pet.

## breeders

Buying a purebred puppy or kitten from a registered breeder is a good way of getting exactly the type of pet you're after. There are cat and dog breeder organisations in all states of Australia – purebred dog and cat breeders should be registered with a relevant organisation. Do your homework and buy from a responsible breeder who health tests their pets.

For more information on dog and cat breeders, visit the *best places for you to find a pet* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## animal shelters

Animal shelters can be a great place to find not only puppies and kittens but also mature dogs and cats. Many shelters and pounds ensure pets pass a behavioural assessment before being offered for adoption. A good shelter should evaluate every dog and cat, and try to match them with an appropriate home.

Some of the larger national shelter organisations include the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League and the Cat Protection Society. There are also a range of other shelters such as the Lost Dogs Home and Lort Smith Animal Hospital in Melbourne. Many local councils run pounds and shelters, and have pets available for adoption. The

free service Sheltermap can help you locate pounds and shelters in your local area.

For assistance with finding an animal shelter, visit the *best places for you to find a pet* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

For information on the benefits of rehoming a mature pet, go to page 40 (in the *choosing the most suitable pet for your household* section).

## on-line and other pet adoption services

There are many on-line services to help would-be pet owners locate suitable pets. PetRescue is a not-for-profit organisation that finds new homes for lost and abandoned pets. Their website includes an on-line, searchable directory of rescue pets from around Australia, making it easy for potential adopters to find and save a rescue pet. Most purebred dog breeds have rescue groups devoted to sheltering, fostering and placing dogs of that particular





breed. If you have a preference for a specific breed and like the idea of helping a dog find a new home, this may be an option worth investigating.

The Greyhound Adoption Program finds pet homes for retired Greyhounds and operates throughout Australia.

For more information and links to pet adoption services, visit the *best places for you to find a pet* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## pet shops

Along with pet supplies, some pet shops sell smaller pet species and also puppies and kittens. If you plan on buying from a pet shop, you should make sure you are dealing with an ethical trader that is selling healthy puppies and kittens of sound temperament.

Many of the pet shops in Australia are members of the Pet Industry Association of Australia (PIAA), and must abide by the Association's strict Code of Practice and Code of Ethics which demonstrate their professionalism and high standards.

PIAA members have access to expertise in all aspects of the pet industry. This means that you can ask a member for advice on any pet-related topic and know that they can source high-quality information.

Most PIAA members display their membership certificate and/or a decal sticker so they can be readily identified.

For more information on the Pet Industry Association of Australia, visit the *best places for you to find a pet* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).





Wil & Tip

## case study

# Wil Anderson – cat person and lovin’ it

Well-known comedian, Wil Anderson, is a proud “cat person” and has something to say about “the whole men and cats issue”. According to Wil, “In this country if you are a man and you say I like cats, what people actually hear is I have my period, now get me a hot water bottle and a block of chocolate because I want to watch *Grey’s Anatomy*.”

“There is no line in the VB ad that says, You can get it stroking your cat’s tummy until he goes meow, matter of fact, I’ve got it now!”

Wil has three adopted cats – Tip, Diego and Ziggy – and says that the adoption process was easy.

“I think the thing people need to know is how easy it is because of organisations like Pet Rescue. In fact, if Angelina Jolie could adopt kids this easily she would have 100 by now.

“Going through an organisation like Pet Rescue means you can be confident your pet will be healthy and have all its shots and they only match people with pets that suit their needs.”

Here he introduces his three feline friends.

“They are all adopted cats. Well, I say adopted. I think they realise that we are not their real parents.

“The eldest is Tip. He is named that because we got him as a six-week-old kitten at a rescue that was at the rubbish tip near Bowral. We wanted to remind him even though he was having a spoiled city life, he was still from the wrong side of the tracks. You know, like Ryan from *The OC*.

“Then there is Diego, who is a Burmese cat who was in an accident and going to be put down when we got him

at about eight weeks. He walks with a limp, although he can still get up some speed when he gets going. Every time you watch him get up it is like the final scene of *The Usual Suspects*.

“And finally Ziggy, who is white and had been hit by a car. He was tiny when we got him and he just likes to eat. Everything. Especially if it is on our plate. He is the only cat who would go on *MasterChef*. He would only eat a mouse if he got to marinate, stuff and slow-roast it first.”

Wil says he loves being a cat owner and knows that it is good for him, but they currently have no plans to add more cats to their household. “We are a little worried that if we take in too many more animals the neighbours will think we are building an ark in the backyard!”

# socialisation, training and general care



It's often said that the dog is man's best friend, but it should be understood that achieving a good, lasting bond between humans and their animal companions is not necessarily a given. Successful bonds take time to build and effort to maintain. Those owners who invest time and effort in positively shaping their dog's behaviour can expect to have a better relationship with their dogs than those who don't.

It's important to remember that dogs need guidance from their owners. Clear and consistent boundaries encourage acceptable behaviour and result in happier dogs. All dogs of all ages depend on their owners to not only feed and care for them, but to also show them how to live in a human world and what is expected of them. It's hugely important that dog owners provide sensible boundaries and training for their pets.



# tips to help you socialise your puppy

- Your puppy's socialisation should have started around three weeks – well before you acquire him. Ask the person that you are obtaining the puppy from whether the puppy has had an opportunity to interact with dogs other than littermates, other animals and a variety of humans.
- Your puppy should meet a range of people from a young age.
- Make sure your puppy is used to being groomed on a daily basis, as this will help to make him relaxed with these activities when he is older.
- Expose your puppy to a range of different experiences: other animals, unexpected objects on the ground, prams or pushers. Rides in the car and loud noises such as skateboards are all new, and potentially scary, experiences to a puppy.
- Using a food reward when your puppy displays relaxed behaviour in a new environment or situation is a good way to create a positive association.
- Never force your pup to approach anyone or anything; let them explore on their own terms, quietly praising and encouraging when they boldly approach by themselves.
- If your puppy shows signs of fear or nervousness, act as you would like your puppy to act – happy and cheerful. Your puppy will pick up more from your confident vibes than from words of reassurance, which may unintentionally sound like praise for the fearful behaviour.
- Puppies get tired or overwhelmed easily, so break socialisation activities into short periods and keep an eye on your puppy to make sure he is not overwhelmed by the situation.

Dogs that are untrained and unsocialised are often noisy, anxious and unpredictable. They are certainly harder to live with than well-trained, well-socialised companions. Often dog owners think their dogs are misbehaving or being disobedient when in reality the dog has simply not been trained to reliably do the things the owner expects. Owners can't expect dogs to behave unless they have taken the time to teach them.

## puppy socialisation

Animal behaviour experts agree that one of the most important aspects of responsible pet ownership is socialising your dog from an early age. Socialising is simply a term for activities that introduce your puppy to a variety of experiences in a positive and safe environment so they learn how to be a confident and friendly, well-behaved member of society.

Between three to twelve weeks of age is a critical stage in every dog's life – it's the prime socialisation period. During this time, the experiences encountered by a puppy play an important part in shaping their behaviour as an adult dog.

Puppies exposed to positive experiences with a wide range of people, places and things during this time grow up to be relaxed and confident dogs. Puppies that are isolated or have negative experiences during socialisation are much more likely to react in a fearful or aggressive way to new situations as an adult. Although continuing socialisation is important, it is never as influential or effective as this early socialisation.

Owners may worry that they are putting their puppy at risk by starting socialisation before the pup's vaccination program has been completed; however, it's worth remembering that far more dogs are surrendered or put to sleep due to behavioural problems than the numbers that contract fatal viral diseases. Ideally, puppies should be fully vaccinated before they interact fully with other dogs

or are walked in areas where other dogs toilet; however, once their vaccination program has started, it's possible to introduce your puppy to others of a similar age that have also commenced a vaccination program. Older vaccinated dogs, especially ones with a quiet temperament, can also be introduced to your puppy under supervision. Your veterinarian can provide you with advice.

Puppy socialisation classes are a great way to get started with a new puppy. They help increase owners' knowledge of puppy care and preliminary training, and also provide an opportunity for puppies to socialise with other puppies in a supervised environment. The 2006 National People and Pets Survey indicated that almost 20% of owners had taken their puppy to puppy socialisation classes. These classes are relatively new in Australia so it's encouraging to see their increasing popularity. Your veterinarian can advise you on puppy socialisation and classes in your area.

For more information on puppy socialisation, visit the *puppy socialisation* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).



Dogs and cats can live for many years and by putting in extra effort in the early months of a puppy or kitten's life, owners can help ensure they have a well-mannered companion for the longer term.

### crate training

Crate training has been used extensively overseas, and is gaining popularity in Australia as the trend for higher-density living grows. A "crate" is a secure type of cage where a puppy can safely and comfortably be secured.

The purpose of crate training is not to cage or confine your dog, but to provide a den substitute – somewhere that your dog knows she can go, free from disturbances. Crate training can be used effectively to help toilet train a young pup, to provide a "bedroom" for sleeping at night, and as a safe area for your dog when you can't be there to supervise her. Traditionally, many people have locked puppies out of doors or in the laundry when they can't be supervised. Crate training can be ideal for those with limited outdoor access. The crate provides an opportunity for the puppy to be secured indoors where she can feel involved in household activities, plus the crate can keep your puppy safe when there's no one home, limiting the potential for damage from chewing or other destructive behaviours.

For more information on the benefits of crate training and how to crate train, visit *the crate training* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

### on-going training

Most dog owners are aware of the necessity and advantages of training a puppy, but don't realise how valuable on-going training can be. Just as walks and runs are important for physical exercise, training provides mental stimulation for your dog, which helps prevent boredom. Ongoing training is vital to refresh and reinforce trained behaviour.

Whilst obedience training, often incorporating check-chains, has traditionally been popular in Australia, more recently a newer style of positive reinforcement training (or reward-based training) for pet dogs is being utilised. Pet dog training incorporates behaviours that are important to the dog and owner in everyday life. In pet dog training, the emphasis is on having a well-mannered pet in a range of situations.

Dog training classes are popular, as they provide education in a sociable environment for dog and owner. Some classes incorporate a "free play" session into the class, so your dog can enjoy interacting with other dogs, while the owners take a moment to chat and swap hints and tips.

Formal dog training can be run by either a private training business or by a community dog club, and may be either one-on-one or a class situation. You can also train your pet yourself in a far less formal manner, using a book or other reference to guide you when teaching new skills. You can then incorporate training into a walk or other daily routines as well.

Research has proven that training improves dog sociability and may have significant implications for dog owners through reducing problem behaviours. Training may also have significant benefits for dogs, whose welfare is likely to be considerably improved if they are sufficiently well-mannered and sociable to engage in shared activities with their owners. All very good reasons to make the effort to train your best friend.

## Karin Bridge – Behavioural Trainer

Training is communication. Dogs want to have a special and close relationship with us, but they need help in learning how to live in our crazy human-orientated world. I find what most owners describe as stubbornness, willfulness, dominance or even stupidity is simply a “failure to communicate” between the owner and dog. Training provides a communication system. Dogs know how to “sit”, “stand”, “down” and “come” – they do it all the time. What they don’t know are the human words for these behaviours and why they should do them when asked. With training, your dog learns how to get what he wants (attention, praise, games, treats) by pleasing you (with a “sit”, “down” or “come”) – a win/win situation for you and your dog.

I get a surge of pleasure knowing my dogs have listened, understood and agreed to be my partner in whatever task we undertake – be it a clean run on a jumping course or simply coming when called. Training based on education rather than intimidation builds that kind of relationship.

expert



Karin Bridge & Matilda

comment

And don't forget you can also train your dog (or cat) to do tricks. Trick training can provide a huge amount of mental stimulation for pets, and serves to reinforce obedience and discipline at the same time.

There are a range of qualified dog trainers operating in Australia. The Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) Australia provides continuing education for trainers and those involved with dogs to develop and exchange ideas regarding pet dog training and behaviour. Canine Good Citizen Instructors are qualified behavioural trainers accredited by Delta Society Australia.

For more information on dog training and help with locating qualified trainers, visit the *ongoing training* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

### kitten socialisation and cat training

Just as puppies need to be socialised, so do kittens. Research shows that kittens who are handled every day for the first months of their lives are friendlier, learn faster and

accept new situations more easily. Ideally, kittens should be handled frequently from a very early age and exposed to a range of people, including children. They should be allowed to meet other animals and hear normal, everyday noises such as vacuum cleaners. It's also a good idea to introduce them to a cat carrier in preparation for future vet visits or travel. Well-socialised kittens are more likely to grow into happy and emotionally healthy cats.

It's commonly believed that cats cannot be trained. However, by using the correct methods, cats respond well to training. Like dogs, cats may be trained to develop useful behaviour (such as sitting, walking on a lead or playing retrieving games) or discouraged from nuisance behaviour (jumping on the kitchen bench or scratching the furniture). Some cats will even learn to perform tricks, if they enjoy the attention it generates. Even basic training helps make your cat a more enjoyable companion, and provides a fun and different way for you and your pet to interact.

For more information on kitten socialisation and advice on training your cat, visit the *kitten socialisation and cat training* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

### socially responsible pet ownership

It's important for all pet owners to consider others by caring for their pets in a manner that avoids nuisance or lack of amenity for the rest of the community.

Remember to always keep your dog or cat secure and confined on your property. Wandering or stray dogs and cats at large are a source of public nuisance and a risk to people, other animals and to themselves. Leash your dog when walking in public except in off-leash areas. Prevent your dog from barking excessively and becoming a noisy nuisance in your neighbourhood. Identify your pet with both a collar and tag, and microchip and register your pet with your local council as required.

### bringing home your new pet

When bringing a new pet into any home, it is important to be well prepared with bedding, mats, feeding areas and bowls. If you are planning to use a dog toilet or kitty litter tray, have that ready for when your new pet first enters your





If you're bringing a new puppy into your home you have to be realistic: it will take some extra effort, it will be messy and you will have to look for every opportunity to train your friend in your house rules. Read books, use the internet, ask questions, be patient and don't expect everything to be perfect. Be prepared to compromise.

home, and start by asking him or her to use it straight away. Pets like to have a quiet space they can call their own, and dogs, especially, like routine so establish the house rules in advance and communicate them clearly from day one.

If you're bringing a new puppy into your home you have to be realistic: it will take some extra effort, it will be messy and you will have to look for every opportunity to train your friend in your house rules. Read books, use the internet, ask questions, be patient and don't expect everything to be perfect. Be prepared to compromise.

There is a range of excellent information on the internet that can help you make the most of your first days and weeks with your new pet. For more information, visit the *bringing your new pet home* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## general care

When pets and people share a smaller, indoor living environment, your approach to the way in which you care for your pet can make a big difference to the way you enjoy life together.

Most people regard their pet as part of the family and, like any member of the family, if your pet is to be at its best it needs a healthy diet, access to clean water at all times, some help with grooming and skin care, as well as lots of love and affection.

Pets also require preventative health care measures such as vaccination, regular worming and parasite protection, as well as treatments for fleas and ticks, especially in the warmer months. For advice on general care and any special treatment for your pet, see your vet.

As discussed elsewhere, cats are well suited to apartment living, even where there is no outdoor space. Not all dogs need a lot of exercise but all pets need mental stimulation and the chance to stretch their legs once in a while. Toys and interaction with other pets or humans will help prevent boredom, and a daily walk is a great opportunity for dogs and owners to bond and practise important training steps.

Finally, as any apartment owner with pets can tell you, the type of food you feed your pet makes a big difference to its toileting habits. Quality foods with high levels of digestibility will reduce both the odour and size of your pet's poo and can reduce the number of times your pet toilets during the day. Of course, picking up after your pet is also important in creating a hygienic and pleasant environment for both you and your pet.

For more detailed information on caring for your pet, visit the *general care* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).





Sami & Lolli

# case study

## Sami Lukis and Lolli

Sami Lukis, co-host of Sydney's Triple M breakfast program, says that her Bichoodle "Lolli" was really meant to be a Staffie, but when she first saw the little Bichon x Toy Poodle there was no going back.

"When I was ready to become a dog owner I was actually looking for a Staffie but I felt an instant bond the moment I saw Lolli. I never imagined I'd end up with a white fluff-ball but it was love at first sight and she has turned out to be the perfect dog for me."

Sami says that she was aware of the need to create an environment that would allow Lolli to be a happy and healthy dog.

"Lolli has always been an apartment dog. Toilet training was the most difficult issue for us, but she's now fully trained. She has a trusty pet loo on the balcony, and I

make sure I take her outside to the same patch of grass a few times a day. I also make sure I walk her at least once a day (usually twice)."

Socialisation was an important early part of the relationship for Sami and Lolli.

"I can't understand why anyone would buy a dog, and then just leave it sitting alone in an apartment, or yard, all day long. It's cruel, and unnecessary."

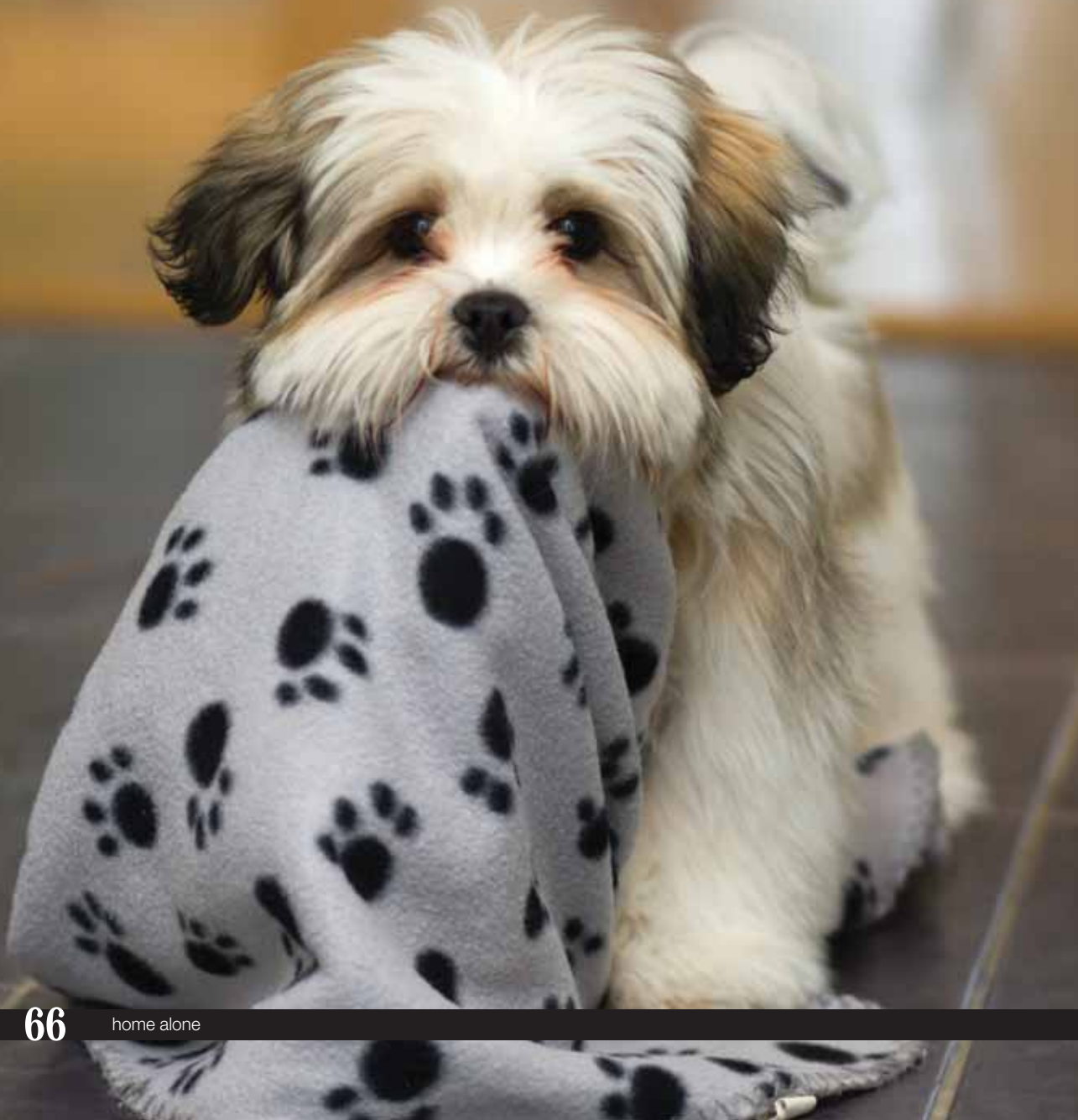
"I made sure she was well socialised, and I take every opportunity to take her with me to appointments, meetings and social catch-ups with friends. Luckily, my bank, hairdresser and even the local cafes are all dog-friendly. People now comment regularly about what a well behaved dog she is, in public situations."

"I'm also lucky that I have a job where I can often be home by 10 or 11am, so I probably get the chance to spend more time with her than most dog owners."

"I had several one-on-one dog training classes which gave me some valuable tips about establishing important guidelines – to ensure a happy, healthy relationship – and to make sure Lolli could be the happiest, healthiest dog possible. I also take her to doggy day care once or twice a week – so she can socialise with other dogs."

"I love being Lolli's owner; she gives me unconditional love and companionship. She's my best mate, and I simply can't imagine life without her. She makes me laugh out loud every single day. I only hope I make her as happy as she makes me!"

# home alone



Most of us appreciate some “alone time” but nobody wants to have so much time alone that they feel “lonely”. This may be a reason why one of the biggest barriers preventing non-pet owners from acquiring a pet is the concern that their new companion would be alone for long periods while they are out. In fact, concerns about leaving pets home alone ranked second only to not being allowed to keep a pet in a property as a reason for not keeping a pet at all. Indeed, 37% of non-pet owners said that fears their pet would be alone too much kept them from sharing their lives with a dog or cat.

These concerns were strongest when considering a canine companion, with 40% of non-dog owners citing concerns about leaving dogs alone, compared to just 27% of non-cat owners. There are good reasons for this discrepancy: in general, people feel that dogs have been bred to be highly interactive and dependent on people, compared to their feline counterparts that people feel are more independent. But prospective pet owners shouldn't be fooled by species stereotypes. Dogs and cats both enjoy human company – but both can also be content if they're home alone.





## how much time do pets really spend alone?

These days it's not uncommon for multiple members of a household to work full time. Then there are other commitments, like sport and social activities – not all of which are pet-friendly – that can require extended periods out of the house.

So how much time are our pets spending “home alone”? Well, surprisingly few. Some owners in our survey reported that their pet was never home alone. In some cases this was because one member of the household was always home at any given time. In other cases it was because the animal attended a day care or minding facility, or went with the owner when the owner left the house.

The majority of owners left their animal home alone at some point during the week: around 38% of pet owners reported that their animal was home for less than 10 hours in any given seven-day period. Another 28% of pet owners reported that their pet was home alone for between 10 and 19 hours a week. Less than one-third of owners reported that their animal

was home alone for more than 20 hours per week. This includes 14% of owners who reported that their animal was home alone for between 20 and 39 hours per week. Only 13% of owners had pets at home by themselves for more than 40 hours per week.

Interestingly 36% of the pet owners surveyed worked full time, yet as indicated above, only 13% of pets were home alone for more than 40 hours. It would appear that whilst many pets have the potential to be left alone for long periods of time, in reality their owners make arrangements so that they are not.

On the whole, dog owners reported that their pets were home alone for fewer hours than cat owners. This may be in part because dogs can more readily join their owners on excursions outside of the home (for example, on visits to family or friends). It may also be due to a perceived need on the part of the dog owners to be with their pets as much as possible.

## what do pets do when they are home alone?

This is a tricky question to answer, as unless you have cameras installed in your home it is impossible to tell what your pet or pets get up to in your absence. The good news is that pets are creatures of habit. In the main, they treat their owner's departure as part of their daily routine. Alone-time is also a chance for animals to sleep, something they spend a lot more time doing than we do. Cats in particular are renowned for their almost insatiable appetite for sleep, with the average indoor cat snoozing for 16 to 20 hours per day. Older cats may sleep for even longer. Studies examining brain activity in sleeping cats have found that cats spend 30% of their sleep time in deep sleep, with 70% in light sleep (“cat nap”) phases. Many dogs spend the majority of their day sleeping – in fact, it is thought they may spend as much as 14 hours per day asleep, although this can vary significantly depending on the breed and age of the dog. Other activities for dogs include interacting with and playing with toys or household items, playing with other companion

# tips to help you minimise the time your pet spends alone and reduce the impact of being left alone

- Consider working from home. It may be for a full day, an hour each day, or even a week here and there. You might even look after someone else's pet in your home, then swap and leave your pet at their house at times.
- Plan your schedule so that one member of the household is around when the others aren't.
- Send your dog to doggy day care, grooming or a play group when you're out for an extended period of time.
- Encourage your pet to bond with people other than you. Have a friend, relative or trusted house-sitter or dog-walker come and feed and "hang out" with your dog or cat or walk your dog when you're out.
- Adopt a canine or feline companion so your pet always has a friend to spend time with.
- If you have a dog, reward him for responding calmly to cues such as keys rattling, signalling you are about to leave the house.
- Avoid making a fuss of your pet whenever you leave or return home, just speak quietly until they are calm.
- Enrich your pet's environment by providing toys such as treat balls or scratching posts. On page 85 (in the *common problems* section) we provide tips to help prevent boredom.
- Give your pet plenty of physical and mental exercise when you know you'll be out for an extended period so the pet is tired and more inclined to sleep while you are away.
- Maximise the time you spend with your pet when you are home.
- Provide safe outdoor access if possible. On page 84 (in the *common problems* section) we provide information on safe outdoor access for cats.
- Remember, all these suggestions should happen at regular and predictable times so that you do not increase your pet's anxiety.

animals in the household and eating. What dogs do during the day will depend on the individual and whether they are anxious about being left.

Not all animals cope equally with alone time. Some dogs may suffer from separation anxiety, which is a medical condition that can result in problematic behaviours. Fortunately there are ways to help improve your pet's chances of coping when they're home alone.

## don't leave me

Separation anxiety needs to be distinguished from boredom, although both can result in destructive behaviour. Separation anxiety in animals is a serious problem that occurs when animals are over-attached to people, usually to their owner. It is a profound fear of being alone which can manifest itself

in a range of signs, from obvious anxiety (for example, affected dogs may pant or pace around the house) to more extreme behavioural problems including house soiling, destruction and excessive vocalisation.

Often affected pets behave anxiously when they anticipate that the owner is about to leave the house – picking up on cues such as the owner lifting up a handbag, putting on shoes or jangling car keys.

Both dogs and cats can experience anxiety, but affected dogs are much more likely to be noticed as they are more likely to cause damage to property or bark. This behaviour may be reinforced with the attention it brings the animal. The longer separation-related behaviours continue, the more difficult they are to modify, so be proactive by providing an appropriate environment or consulting a vet if you think your pet has separation anxiety.

## diagnosis of separation anxiety

Separation anxiety can only be diagnosed by a veterinarian, veterinary behaviourist or registered specialist in behavioural medicine. It occurs when the pet is anxious about being separated from their owners for even short periods of time. Some tell-tale indicators that may indicate that the animal is over-attached to the owner are that problem behaviours occur only when the pet is left alone and destructive behaviour is oriented towards barriers such as doors.

## treatment of separation anxiety

The principles of treating separation anxiety include the use of behaviour modification techniques to reduce anxiety when the animal is alone. This can help desensitise the pet to being alone, usually by exposing the pet to gradually

## Dr Kersti Seksel –Veterinary Behaviourist

Dogs are social creatures, just like us, which means they like to have company, at least some of the time. So if you work long hours and also have an active social life, then please do not get a dog and think you can leave it alone in an apartment, backyard or courtyard all day and all night. Most pets, however, do not mind spending some time alone as long as it is regular and predictable – they like a chance to recharge their batteries too! There are lots of good options for having a pet and managing their life as well as yours.

If your pet is showing signs of separation anxiety, please seek help from your veterinarian as soon as possible – they do not grow out of this condition and it can get worse with time. There are many ways to help your pet learn to be less stressed and anxious, and cope with being alone.

# expert



Kersti Seksel & Indi

# comment

longer periods of “alone time”. Mildly affected animals may respond to a combination of behaviour modification and environmental management. Sometimes, modifying the behaviour of the owners can make a big difference. For example, not fussing over your pet when they show signs of anxiety or concern as you are about to leave the house. Making a fuss may reward their anxious behaviour, making it more likely to recur.

Pets that are mildly anxious when left can be helped by quietly praising them for quiet and relaxed behaviour. Giving them a safe place to go, such as a mat or a crate, can also be used as a relaxation cue – somewhere they go to feel safe and secure.

More severely affected animals usually require medication prescribed by a veterinarian, in addition to environmental management and behaviour modification.

### support networks for people who do need to leave their pets home alone

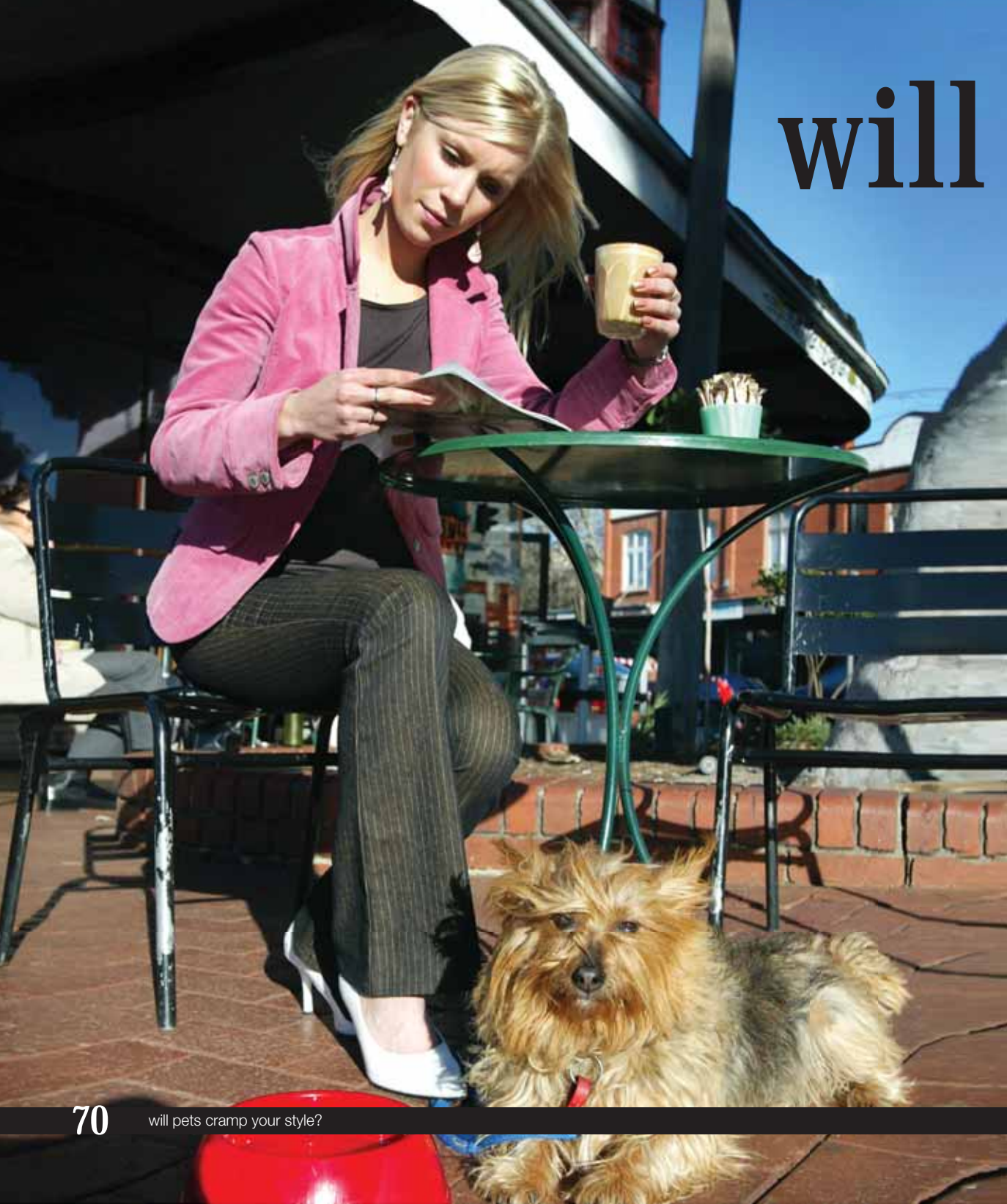
Remember you aren't alone. Around 92% of pet owners leave their animals alone at least some of the time.

- Ask friends or neighbours to visit and spend time with your pet – even better, if they have a pet of their own, you can offer to return the favour.
- Dog specific on-line networks are a great way to find other dog owners in your local area to potentially swap puppy play dates with.
- Also remember there are now doggy day care and dog walking services available in many areas.

For more information on separation anxiety and on-line networks for dog owners, visit the *don't leave me* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).







# will pets cramp your style?

Research shows that non-pet owners may avoid acquiring a pet because of the potential impact on their lifestyle. For example, 30% of non-pet owners felt that owning a pet would restrict their ability to travel on holidays and weekends. Another 28% felt they were too busy to own a pet, while 22% said they moved around too much. And then there was money: almost one in five non-pet owners (18%) said they believed that owning a pet might be too expensive for them. It is true that owning a pet requires the owner to dedicate time and money. But there are ways to deal with these concerns.

## holidays with and without pets

Pet owners take holidays – and plenty of them! The majority arrange for someone to look after their animals in their absence. This may involve having a friend, family member or pet-minding service come to feed the animal regularly, having someone house-sit (they can also look after your property and bring in the mail) or sending their pet to a cattery or kennel for the duration of their stay.





There are services that can even match your dog to screened minders who will take them into their home and care for them as if they were their own pet while you are away. Many people are now opting to find pet-friendly accommodation to take their pets on holidays with them. Whatever you decide to do, remember to make arrangements for your pet well ahead of time, particularly during school holiday periods.

If you choose to leave your pet at home and arrange for a friend to provide food, water, cuddles and maybe exercise, you should ensure your friend is absolutely reliable and they are going to call at least twice a day. Make sure also that they have enough knowledge of animal health and behaviour to know if things are not right.

If using a professional pet sitter or minder, ensure they have references, and do check them out. It is imperative that they have experience and also that they are mature enough to accept the responsibility of caring for your pet. Invite them around to your home to meet your pet and discuss their special needs. Remember that you are committing the well being of your pets solely to this

person. If they are unreliable and do not turn up one day, your pet will be left without food or water. Many veterinarians will know of someone reliable in your area.

It's not a good idea to leave dogs at home being visited by pet sitters for more than a few days. Dogs can become lonely and bored when left for extended periods without their usual amount of human companionship. If they start to bark and annoy the neighbours, you won't be there to know about it or be able to resolve the problem.

There are professional organisations such as the Dog Walkers and Professional Pet Minders Association (DAPPA) in NSW and the Companion Animal Service Providers Association (CASPA) in Victoria who have a database of members offering dog-walking and pet-minding services, all of whom are required to adhere to a professional code of conduct.

In the unlikely situation that your pet becomes ill while you are absent, be sure to leave your vet's name and after-hours number, a phone number where you can be contacted or give prior authorisation for someone to act

on your behalf should the pet need veterinary attention. Some vets may be reluctant to perform surgery without the owner's consent.

Many inner-city veterinary hospitals offer boarding for cats as well as dogs. Urban dog-boarding facilities located close to airports are the perfect place to board your dog while you go on a business trip or holiday. For example, if you usually work from home or leave your dog indoors while you go to work, and you sometimes need to fly interstate for the day, leaving early and getting home late, instead of worrying about leaving your dog for longer than usual you can drop him off on your way to the airport and collect him when you arrive back, or the next day.

Animal boarding facilities located outside of the city will often collect your pet from a convenient drop-off location such as your local veterinary clinic as part of the service. Better yet, many of these services offer optional extras such as professional training and grooming. Dog and cat boarding facilities are also listed in the Yellow Pages and on the internet, or you could ask your pet-owning friends or your veterinarian for a recommendation.



A study by the University of Western Australia's School of Population Health found that over 50% of dog owners and 40% of pet owners in general met people in their neighbourhood as a result of their pet.

Be sure to personally inspect any premises where you're planning to leave your dog or cat – they should be clean and secure with expert, competent staff available at all times and a veterinarian on call in case your pet becomes ill.

Of course, another alternative is to take your pet or pets with you on holidays. Books like *Holidaying with Dogs* and *Holidaying with Cats* list numerous pet-friendly caravan parks, camping grounds, B&Bs, holiday rentals and cottages where your pet can stay with you – and enjoy all the fun of the holiday. There are also several websites dedicated to pet-friendly holiday accommodation.

TV Vet Dr Katrina Warren has a website listing a wide range of pet-friendly holiday options.

Whether your pet goes to a boarding establishment or remains home, they should be wearing a collar and identification tag and preferably also be microchipped.

Home feeders should also be given a list of people to contact if the pet escapes and is lost.

First on the list should be your local council and adjoining councils, followed by local veterinarians and all animal welfare shelters. Leaving it until you return home to look for your pet may mean that the animal has been sold or euthanised as unclaimed after the required holding period.

For more information on pet-minding options, professional dog minders and walkers and holidaying with pets, visit the *holidays with and without pets* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

### pets and your social life

Not only do pets provide direct companionship, they also act as social enablers. A study by the University of Western Australia's School of Population Health found that over

50% of dog owners and 40% of pet owners in general met people in their neighbourhood as a result of their pet. Furthermore, 80% of dog owners talked to others when out walking their dogs.

However, your days of going straight from work to the pub and then out all night might be somewhat inhibited by dog ownership. Dogs like routine, so if you're planning a late night you should at least call in at home and feed and pay attention to your dog, or arrange for someone else to do it for you. You might be surprised to find that neighbours who can't have a dog themselves might enjoy being able to assist with providing care and companionship for your dog, and neighbours with dogs might be happy to reciprocate pet-minding and feeding arrangements.

Don't forget, if you're heading out to a friend's house and your dog is well behaved, you might find you and your dog are both welcome. Often friends and family who don't own dogs will be glad of the opportunity for some canine





company. Also, many dog owners socialise routinely with other dog owners and bring their pets along to each other's houses; the dogs get to know each other and have as good a time socialising as the owners.

Dogs in particular have the benefit of ensuring you exercise regularly and, especially for women, they provide feelings of safety when out walking.

### the real cost of keeping dogs and cats

When you crunch the numbers, dogs and cats are relatively inexpensive. According to a study commissioned by the Australian Companion Animal Council, the average cost of owning a dog per annum was \$1,056 (just over \$20 per week). Cats were even less expensive, at around \$602 per annum (just over \$11 per week). The majority of expenses related to food and veterinary care, followed by pet-care

products and equipment and non-veterinary services such as grooming and training.

Australian pet owners are increasingly insuring their pets against accidents and emergencies so that unexpected veterinary bills are almost completely covered. Many policies offer rebates for routine health procedures, such as annual vaccinations.

Other ways to minimise animal-related expenses include choosing the appropriate pet for your household and lifestyle; keeping up to date with routine veterinary care such as vaccination and worming; and ensuring your pet is desexed.

**According to a study commissioned by the Australian Companion Animal Council, the average cost of owning a dog is \$1,056 per annum and a cat is \$602 per annum. The majority of expenses are related to food and veterinary care.**



will pets cramp your style?

# the great outdoors... or not

The role of animals in Australian households has evolved from cohabitants to companions. While pets were once relegated to the backyard and fed kitchen scraps, they've moved into our houses and hearts. Part of the reason is improved dietary options and health care for animals – animals are now healthier and cleaner than ever before.

There are now safe, reliable products to rid our pets of parasites and prevent them from getting sick. And of course healthier, consistent commercial diets mean that it's easier to manage their waste. We're more conscious of our neighbours and council by-laws, so we're more likely to contain our animals responsibly and take steps to prevent nuisance behaviour such as straying and barking at the gate. We're also more conscious of the welfare of our animals – we want to keep them safe and healthy. Moving pets indoors increases their lifespan by reducing the incidence of fighting with other animals and accidents such as motor vehicle trauma.



For dogs and cats, living indoors with another animal companion in an enriched environment is far superior to being shut outside and bored! In fact, survey respondents indicated that almost a third of all dogs spent virtually all their time indoors.



But one of the biggest reasons for this shift from primarily outdoor to primarily indoor pets is the demise of the great Aussie backyard. Our preference for higher density urban living means that the large suburban backyard is less common than it once was. In fact, many of us don't even have a backyard. But that doesn't spell bad news for companion animals. Let's look at some of the myths about pets and the great outdoors.

#### myth: pets should live outdoors

Twenty years ago, the typical Australian pet spent most, if not all, of their time outdoors, primarily in the backyard. That just isn't the case anymore. Our research showed that around one-third of respondents' pets had limited ability to access outdoor space by themselves, with 21% having independent access to outdoors sometimes and 5% occasionally. Another 13% of pets were only allowed outdoors under supervision, while 9% (4% of dogs and 14% of cats) were never allowed outdoors.

Interestingly, the research also showed that only a few short decades ago 39% of respondents' family pets spent most of their time outdoors and only 23% spent most of their time indoors. In stark contrast, only 21% of respondents' current pets spend most of their time outdoors, whilst 53% spend most of their time indoors. In fact, almost a third of all dogs spent virtually all their time indoors.

#### myth: dogs and cats need a big backyard

When they are allowed out, the majority of our respondents' pets actually spent their time in a confined area. For example, 51% spent their time in the garden (63% of dogs and 43% of cats) and 32% spent time in a courtyard (39% of dogs and 26% of cats). Just over one-quarter (26%) of pets spent their time on the verandah, while another 20% (13% of dogs and 25% of cats) spent their time in a communal area.

#### myth: apartment complexes aren't pet-friendly

Many apartment complexes have communal areas which can be used by people and their companion animals. Over half of our respondents' pets (53%) living in units were allowed to use common areas in an apartment block, with dogs being more likely than cats to be able to use common areas (61% compared to 49%). Less than one-third (33%) of pets living in units were not allowed to use common areas. This was more common for cats (38%) compared to dogs (23%).

Many apartments now cater to pet owners' needs and actively encourage pet ownership. Some have great access to off-leash areas for dogs and many have large, contained verandahs.





### myth: cats should be able to wander

It's no longer acceptable for pet owners to allow their pets to wander unsupervised. In fact, the majority of respondents' cats (52%) did not leave their owner's dwelling without supervision.

### features of a pet-friendly domicile

Although you can make almost any space pet-friendly, there are some significant, structural housing features that can help make a space work well for pets. The following is a list of the features that potential buyers and renters might look for in a pet-friendly domicile:

- Access to outdoor areas, including communal areas
- Contained inner courtyards and atriums
- Enclosed balconies

- Tiled or wooden floors
- Long corridors (great for cats)
- Access to direct (but not unavoidable) sunlight
- A large common room with space for running around
- Pre-existing pet-friendly features such as cat climbing racks, doggy doors and cat-flaps. Attics with pull-down ladders make a great climbing space for agile young cats – so long as the roof cavity itself is escape proof and safe.

Remember, it's also important to choose the right pet and the right breed for your particular lifestyle.

For more information on keeping pets indoors, visit the *great outdoors or not* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).



## Virginia Jackson – Town Planner

I've been looking at the question of pet-friendly design for over 10 years and I find it intriguing how simple practical measures can make the world of difference to the life of the indoor cat or dog. If we know that cats like to be elevated, then things like accessible window sills or three-quarter high walls in small apartments for example can make the world of difference. If we know dogs and cats like a warm spot in which to lie then it is relatively simple to design windows – even full-length windows – that maximise sunlight. And if we want to maximise the space available to a dog being kept in a small unit with a courtyard or deck, then doggy doors that allow them to move inside and out will help to facilitate that.

Considering the needs of the pet owner is also important. Some owners will want to restrict their pet's access to parts of the dwelling. Fully open-plan dwellings can make this difficult. A discrete location for the pet's pan will also be important for some pet owners. Whilst it takes a bit more effort, there is no reason why most pets can't be kept in compact forms of accommodation. Certainly, all animals benefit from access to outdoor space, but in my opinion it is not a prescriptive requirement for people to have a backyard if they want to own a dog. What's more important is providing them with an enriching space, a loving relationship with the family and regular outings into the public realm.

expert  
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## tips for creating a pet-friendly space

It doesn't take a lot of thought and effort to turn any dwelling into a pet-friendly space:

- Provide a safe play-space, preferably away from fragile ornaments, where your pet can play with toys and treat balls. Plenty of pet and furniture stores stock attractive storage containers for stowing pet toys.
- Provide bedding in several locations so that your pet can change position through the day.
- Create an indoor garden for cats. This may be as simple as providing several potted plants (catnip and cat grass are the most popular). It's a good idea to put a placemat beneath in case your cats tip the plants over in their enthusiasm.
- Some animals appreciate a vantage point close to a window, although dogs with territorial issues should be monitored, as window views can provide too many cues for barking.
- Provide climbing furniture and scratching posts for cats. Pet stores and veterinary hospitals stock a range of fantastic feline furniture that provide cats with hours of fun.
- Consider enclosing your balcony with a screen so that your animal can have free access in your absence.
- Maximise incidental distractions. If your cat is transfixed by your tropical fish tank, ensure he or she can comfortably view the tank through the day – just make sure the tank is covered so that your cat doesn't act on its desires.
- Avoid leaving dogs unsupervised with bones due to choking hazard.





# case study

## developed with pets in mind

Melbourne's Freshwater Place offers the best in inner-city living – with pets welcome. Here, Australand's General Manager Residential Victoria, Rob Pradolin, tells us what makes Freshwater Place's pet-friendly lifestyle so popular.

"I have been involved with the development of inner-city residential properties for many years and it seems to me that interest in higher density living shows no sign of slowing. In fact people of all ages are choosing inner-city apartments and townhouses over the traditional house on a suburban block of land, as they don't want to be tied to the maintenance involved with a traditional home and are choosing low-maintenance apartment living.

"When we developed Freshwater Place, in Melbourne's Southbank, we wanted to make sure that it offered real-life living and, for us, that meant offering a private garden area and a set of facilities unsurpassed in Melbourne. In addition, we wanted to ensure that pets were allowed to be kept in the apartments, as they form part of many people's lives."

Freshwater Place's residents include everyone from young couples, singles of all ages, couples whose children have left home, through to older people who value the vibrancy of inner-city life.

"In my experience, pets help to create a sense of community. You see people stopping to admire a dog and have a chat with the owners. There is a level of social interaction that just doesn't occur when pets are not around. It's a much more grounded environment.

"The fact that Freshwater Place is pet-friendly has certainly been a selling point and we believe it has increased the marketability of the apartments when owners wish to sell," Rob says.









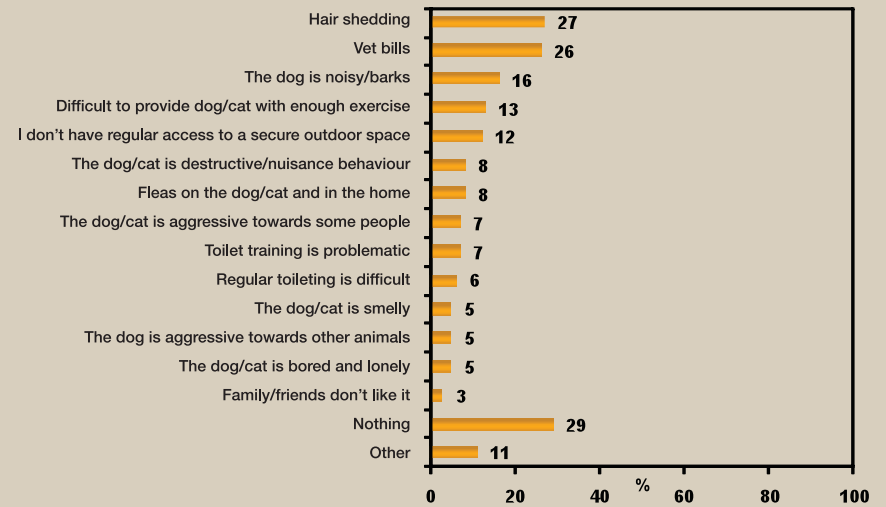
# common problems and tips to help you solve them

It's not surprising that pets and pet owners living in a high-density environment lead different lifestyles to those living on a suburban block with a big backyard. There's less room to move, neighbours are close by (sometimes literally on top of you) and outdoor access may be limited. But the vast majority of owners cope very well keeping their pet in a medium to high-density dwelling. Only 10% found it difficult, with dog owners more likely to experience difficulties than cat owners.

## common problems

We asked pet owners to identify the three biggest problems they encountered and what coping strategies they used to overcome them.

The most common problems associated with keeping pets in a higher density environment included hair shedding (reported by 27% of owners); vet bills (26%); noise and barking (16%); difficulty providing their pet with enough exercise (13%); lack of regular access to a secure outdoor space (12%); destructive or nuisance behaviour (8%); toileting troubles (13%); and a perception that the pet was bored or lonely (5%).



Common problems reported by Pets in the City survey respondents

The types of problems that bothered owners most varied depending on the species. Cat owners were more concerned with lack of regular access to outdoor space (16%), while dog owners had more difficulty providing exercise (16%) and with noise issues (16%); 29% of owners responded that they had no problems.

### coping strategies

Research found that those for whom dog ownership was the least difficult were more likely to have many more strategies to reduce pet boredom, in particular spending time with their dog when at home and having an outdoor area the dog could go to whenever it wanted (including for toileting).

The coping strategies most likely to be utilised by dog owners were (in order of priority):

- Having access to an outdoor space whenever the dog wants it for toileting (65%)
- Spending as much time as possible with the dog when at home (57%)

- Regularly walking around the streets (47%)
- Having a secure outdoor area that the dog can go to whenever it wants (45%)
- Having lots of toys to occupy the dog when alone (34%)
- Training to avoid nuisance behaviour (34%)
- Leaving the radio or television on when the dog is alone (18%)
- Having someone call in and check on the dog during the day (11%)
- Arranging for the dog to visit family or friends when the house is going to be empty (11%).

The coping strategies most likely to be utilised by cat owners were (in order of priority):

- Train the cat to use a litter tray (76%)
- Provision of a scratching post to reduce nuisance behaviour (59%)

- Letting the cat outside regularly (59%)
- Spending as much time as possible with the cat when at home (57%)
- Having lots of toys to occupy the cat when alone (33%).

For both dog and cat owners, the cost of vet bills was overcome either by pet insurance or putting money aside each month.







# noise and barking

One of the biggest issues that can upset neighbourly relations is a noisy pet – especially when the pet is noisy only in the owner's absence. This problem is most commonly associated with dogs, although noise complaints can be made about cats too, particularly in high-density housing. Some cat breeds, such as Orientals and Siamese, are more vocal than others.

Barking is one of the most common reasons for dog-related complaints to local councils. Most owners felt that as long as their pet was comfortable and adequately cared for, it would be unlikely to bark unnecessarily.

Almost half (46%) of owners surveyed did not need to take any action to cope with their dog barking. The key

strategy to reduce noise was training (34%), followed by providing more company for the pet (19%), provision of toys (14%), advice from a professional such as an animal behaviourist (4%), a citronella collar (3%) or other strategy (5%). The most common "other" strategy was keeping the dog indoors, as a number of owners found that their dog barked only when outside of the house. Keeping the animal indoors when unattended reduced stimulation to bark but also muted noise. Others felt that providing lots of exercise when they were around wore their animal out so that it was less likely to bark when left alone.

For more information on barking and resolving problem barking, visit the *noise and barking* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## tips to help you resolve problem barking

- Barking can cause conflict between neighbours. Some owners aren't even aware that their dog barks until they are alerted by others. Thank your neighbours for alerting you and let them know you are working on a solution. If a complaint has resulted in action by your local council, liaise with council and keep them advised that you are working to resolve the problem. Problem barking is rarely resolved overnight and it may take weeks to months to effect a change in behaviour – but it can be done.
- Work out when and why your dog barks. Is it when the doorbell rings? Is it when people walk past in the street? Is it when you're gone for longer than an hour or is it only when you are gone all day? Common reasons for barking include boredom, separation anxiety, territorial behaviour, reactivity to noises and fear.
- Remove the stimulus for territorial behaviour: if your dog is a natural guarder, prevent access to the boundaries of your property (gates, fence lines and windows). Consider keeping your dog indoors. Dogs can sometimes be desensitised to certain stimuli (for example, people walking past your property on the way to work each day).
- Mental exercise for your dog will help prevent boredom: provide engaging toys that your dog can use in your absence, and have someone check on and even walk your dog during the day.
- Last-resort solutions such as citronella collars don't address the underlying cause – they simply provide a disincentive to bark.
- Dogs that bark due to fear or separation anxiety may require intensive desensitisation and medication.
- Don't shout at your dog when he's barking – if you raise the decibel level, so will your dog. If your arousal level goes up, so will your dog's.
- Aim to prevent barking from the outset. From the moment you bring your puppy home, reward calm and relaxed behaviour.



## exercise and outdoor access

Most owners viewed exercising their dog as a benefit of dog ownership, as it provided motivation for the owner to walk and run – and a companion to do it with. In general, dog owners were aware of the need to give their pets exercise to minimise behavioural problems. Some owners had ended up with dogs that were more energetic than expected; however, this is something they coped with by exercising the dog as much as possible. In fact, despite living in medium to high-density housing, only 15% of owners said they had a breed that didn't need much exercise.

The survey found that half the pets (51%) were let out regularly for exercise and 47% of owners regularly walked their dog around the streets; 21% of owners coped with the exercise demands of their dog by increasing exercise on weekends. Another 2% paid a dog-walker to exercise their

dog for them. And 31% of owners had access to a secure outdoor area that their pet could use whenever they chose. But not all exercise happened outdoors. Owners undertook other activities with their dogs, including ball-chasing, wrestling and encouraging play with another dog, to exercise their pets. Cat owners were more likely to let cats outdoors regularly without supervision but some owners had trained their cat to walk on a harness.

On pages 76 – 77 (in *the great outdoors...or not* section) we provide tips on how to create a pet-friendly space and also features of a pet-friendly domicile. There are some great publications on walks to enjoy with your dog. For more information on exercising dogs and safe outdoor access for cats, visit the *exercise and outdoor access* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## tips for exercising your dog

- The easiest way to exercise your dog in an urban environment is to walk the dog on a lead regularly. In addition, your council can provide information about designated off-leash areas where your dog can run free and interact with other dogs.
- If you plan to use an off-leash area, be sure your dog will return to you when called. Dogs are still required to be under the effective control of their owner when off-leash in designated areas.
- Dogs love to accompany owners on trips out of town, which often provide opportunities to run around.
- Another popular way to exercise dogs is to organise play-dates with other dogs that your pets get along with. On-line pet networks allow dog owners to make contact with other dog owners in the area to organise walking buddies and playmates.
- Dog-walking services are available for time-poor owners who can't walk their dog regularly. Professional associations for pet service providers and dog walkers can help you find an appropriate service provider in your area. Alternatively an internet search should provide details of dog walkers in your area. Do your homework to ensure they are reputable – ask for references.
- Providing dog-proof toys not only enriches your dog's environment, but also provides another form of exercise when you're not around – as long as your dog actually plays with the toys. Pet stores and many veterinary clinics stock a huge range of innovative, engaging toys to keep your dog busy for hours on end.

# tips for exercising your cat

- Some may say it can't be done, but the key to exercising cats is play – and plenty of it.
- There are plenty of cat toys on the market, but you needn't spend a fortune to engage your cat in play. Most cats are intrigued by the noise made by a crumpled-up sheet of paper, which they can chase and bat around. Paper bags (with the handles cut off so cats don't get caught in them) are also a source of fun, as are cardboard boxes. And many cats derive hours of entertainment chasing the red dot from a laser pointer around the room – but be careful not to shine the light in the cat's eyes.
- If you are considering adopting a kitten, you may want to consider adopting two. Two kittens don't take up too much extra room but they are twice the fun as they can provide hours of entertainment for each other.
- Some cats can be trained to walk on a lead. Feline-friendly lead and harness kits are available from all good pet stores. It's best to start training cats from an early age.

## safe outdoor access for cats

There is no question that keeping cats indoors extends their lifespan, as they are no longer vulnerable to motor vehicle accidents, encounters with unfriendly dogs and cat fight wounds. Cats are by nature curious creatures, and will commonly harass owners to be let out, but there are plenty of ways to enrich your cat's indoor environment. And for those whose cats absolutely put their paws down and insist on being let outside, a contained cat enclosure may be the answer.

Enclosures can be custom built to fit a variety of areas, such as a balcony, atrium or limited outdoor space, and usually incorporate climbing platforms, ladders and steps, scratching posts, shady spots and even hammocks to help your cat feel more comfortable and entertained. These are particularly popular in areas where council enforces a cat curfew.

Outdoor enclosures for cats can take up otherwise unused space, such as the narrow paths alongside some semi-detached premises. A cat door can be fitted, allowing your cat to choose whether they want to be indoors or outdoors and so you can also control their indoor and outdoor access.



# boredom &

There is a concern that bored pets will make their own fun by tearing the house apart and generally be a nuisance. However, few pet owners surveyed had issues with nuisance behaviour, and those who did dealt with the problem without really being aware that they did so.

Almost 60% of cat owners provided a scratching post to reduce destructive behaviour, while the key strategy for avoiding nuisance behaviour from dogs was providing more exercise (28% of dog owners). Other strategies included training of dogs (22% of owners); provision of more toys (21%) and/or provision of more company (16%). Interestingly, more owners were prepared to allow their pet to continue its destructive ways (5%) than sought help from a professional (3%) – perhaps indicating that much of the destructive behaviour was mild in nature.





# nuisance behaviour

Pet-proofing was important in some cases. If an animal played havoc in a particular room or area of the house, that area was blocked off when the owner was absent. Precious and breakable items were stored out of harm's way to minimise any damage.

Other coping strategies included providing treats, such as bones and chew toys, during the day. Some owners went to great lengths to provide their pet with human or animal company, by taking them out as much as possible, dropping them off at someone else's house when they went out, or taking them to work. Sometimes these arrangements seemed to evolve as a matter of circumstance; for example, an elderly neighbour noticing a dog was spending time alone during the day and volunteering to call in and visit the dog. Likewise, people

initially took their dog to work on a one-off occasion, then when they realised it was beneficial to the dog, the owner and the office to have pets at work it became normal practice.

On page 68 (in the *home alone* section) we provide tips to help reduce the impact of pets being left alone. On page 76 – 77 (in the *great outdoors...or not* section) we provide information to help you create a pet-friendly home. For more information on strategies to reduce boredom, the benefits of pets in the workplace and sample pets at work policies, visit the *boredom and nuisance behaviour* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## tips to prevent boredom and entertain your pet when you're not around

- Provide safe, engaging toys on a rotating basis to challenge your pet (string and wool are not safe toys to leave your cat alone with) and don't leave your dog alone with bones, as they may pose a choking hazard.
- Hide low-fat, nutritious treats in the environment for your pet to find.
- Leave the television or radio on when your pet is home alone.
- Arrange for friends to visit your pet when you're not around, or organise your dog to visit friends or family.
- Adopt a kitten: cats enjoy playing together.
- Plant a cat-friendly garden, with plants like catnip and cat grass for your cat to enjoy.
- Provide spaces to climb and a scratching post or climbing tree.
- Make the most of the time you spend with your pet: regular exercise and play can entertain and expend a lot of otherwise pent-up energy!



## tips for kitty litter-tray troubleshooting

- The key points to remember – cats don't queue and cats don't share.
- Is there a medical reason? Conditions that can cause litter tray problems include urinary tract infections, kidney disease, trauma and age-related incontinence. Your veterinarian can rule out medical causes.
- Litter tray misfires, mishaps, misuse and total avoidance are signs that your cat is trying to tell you something. Ask yourself:
  - Is the tray clean? You might think so, but you're not standing in it. Remove solid waste at least once a day (ideally, whenever you see it) and change clumping litters at least once a week. Some cats might prefer that the litter tray is cleaned daily – just like people prefer the toilet to be flushed every time it's used.
  - What about politics? Litter problems can be due to anxiety or aggression between cats. You should provide at least one tray per cat plus one extra.

This is especially handy during times of high stress like moving house. If problems persist, you may need to consult a veterinarian who specialises in animal behaviour.

- Is the tray in the right location? Your cat should be able to go to the toilet in privacy. Don't keep the litter tray in the same area in which you feed your cat. They find this most off-putting (wouldn't you?).
- Is the tray big enough? If it is too small your cat may struggle to aim. Adult cats need adult-sized trays. Overweight cats might need slightly larger trays (and a diet!).
- Is there enough litter in the tray? It needs to be deep enough to allow your cat to bury its waste. Clumping litters are most effective at absorbing moisture when the tray is filled to the 5cm level. This allows the litter to form a ball around the urine before it drains to the bottom of the tray, so the urine can be removed in a solid clump.

## toileting trouble?

During research, few owners complained about toileting issues. Most appreciated that puppies and kittens required more work than older animals. Cats, in particular, were seen as very clean. In fact, when it comes to cats, the key toileting strategy was provision of kitty litter trays, employed by 76%. For just over half of pet owners, the pet had access to an outdoor space whenever they needed it (53%). Only 19% of dog owners toileted their dogs before and after work, and 6% had artificial grass or some form of pet loo to use for toileting.

Other strategies included providing multiple (for example 3 – 4) short "toilet walks" per day or providing a safe pee spot at night (such as a pee mat, pet loo or artificial grass).

On page 13 (in the *downsizing with pets* section) we provide tips to help you modify your pet's toilet training when you're moving to smaller premises. On page 62 (in the *crate training* section) we provide information on the benefits of confining puppies to a safe, secure space. For more detailed information on toilet training for puppies and dogs, and litter tray training for kittens and cats, visit the *toileting trouble?* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).





## tips for toilet training dogs

- Observation, patience and positive reinforcement are the key to toilet training your puppy or dog.
- Remember, the younger the dog, the more frequently toilet breaks will be required. Puppies may need to urinate as frequently as every two hours. Don't expect a young puppy to be able to hold-on for an entire night.
- Puppies generally will want to toilet whenever they wake, after playtime and after eating or drinking. At these times, take the puppy to the place where you want them to toilet and give a consistent command, then praise and reward the puppy when they have toileted appropriately. It's not difficult to teach your puppy to toilet at any spot of your choosing whenever you give the command – this can be very handy!
- Stick to a routine: dogs are very regular when it comes to going to the toilet.
- Toilet breaks or walks first thing in the morning, after meals and before bed at night are essential. Your dog will learn faster if these breaks occur at the same time each day (including weekends, holidays and when you want to sleep in).
- Designate a toilet area: this is an area where it is okay for your dog to go to the toilet. It may be outside, a courtyard or atrium, or on artificial grass or a pet loo. Dogs should be taken to this spot when they need to go to the toilet: first thing in the morning, after meals and last thing at night. Praise your dog for toileting in this spot.
- Confine your dog: after toileting your dog, and before you go to sleep, confine your puppy or dog to a crate. Dogs are unlikely to mess up their sleeping area so will wait until they can access their normal toileting area – but be sure you get up early so your dog isn't waiting too long.
- Pre-empt your dog: if you notice a sudden change in behaviour, or obvious toileting behaviour (sniffing, circling, squatting or leg-lifting), move your dog to the designated toilet area and praise him or her for using it.
- Clean up accidents quickly: if your dog does have an accident inside, that spot may be seen as an acceptable place to toilet in the future. To minimise the risk of this, clean up all urine and faeces as quickly as possible. Wash the area with an enzymatic washing powder and lots of warm water. Products such as "Urine-Off" help remove the smell of urine which may be left behind by products that just disguise the smell (as far as humans are concerned).
- Don't punish your dog in the event of an accident: it's likely to confuse him or her, which can backfire – the dog learns that toileting in front of the owner is the unacceptable behaviour and can lead to "secret" or "sneaky" toileting.
- If your dog does toilet regularly in the wrong spot, place absorbent puppy pads or artificial grass in that spot. Once your dog is toileting on these, gradually move them to the site where you'd prefer your dog to toilet.





# hair shedding

Research found that 27% of owners reported hair shedding as a common problem associated with keeping pets in high-density housing. This suggests that shedding may be a disincentive for living with pets in the city. The most common coping strategy was regular brushing, but there are plenty of ways to minimise the impact of hair shedding in a small living space. On page 39 (in the *indoor pets – a hairy consideration* section) we provide more information on the dog and cat breeds that are likely to shed the least amount of hair.

## tips to reduce the impact of shedding

- All dogs and cats shed hair – some more than others.
- Selecting a short-haired breed may reduce the overall volume of shedding.
- Brush and comb pets regularly to remove loose fur that will otherwise be shed.
- Have long-haired pets groomed regularly to keep their coats trim.
- Vacuum regularly to remove hair from your living space.
- Use a sticky lint roller to remove fur from clothing.
- Keep pets off furniture.
- Use washable covers or throw-rugs to prevent fur accumulation on favourite furniture.
- Wash pet bedding and towels separately and regularly.
- Restrict pets to areas in your property with hard-surface flooring, such as tiles and floorboards for ease of cleaning.
- Your pet should receive regular veterinary attention. Animals suffering from flea infestation and other skin disease may shed more and are more likely to experience secondary problems such as dandruff.

## Dr Joanne Righetti – Animal Behaviourist

As an animal behaviourist, I often see animals that demonstrate nuisance behaviours such as destructiveness, barking and escaping. These unwanted behaviours may be a symptom of puppy and kitten exploration and exuberance but they are also commonly exhibited by pets that are bored and/or stressed.

Many owners cannot believe that their pet could be bored but many dogs and cats, particularly the more energetic or intelligent ones, need more stimulation than is provided in the average backyard (even a big backyard!).

Other pets become so bonded to their humans that they are stressed when left alone. As with humans, stress is a common part of modern life! Overly dependent pets may need to learn to cope with being alone and be given activities to take their minds off our departure and absence.

Pets love human interaction, so walks, training and games are ideal but we cannot always be there with our animal companions. Pet sitters or day care facilities can be a great relief for many pets and their frustrated owners. Activities such as finding food or playing with a treat ball can be very useful occupiers when home alone. Owners should provide variety in games and toys, and rotate activities around on a daily basis. An occupied pet is less likely to feel bored or stressed and hence less likely to demonstrate those annoying nuisance behaviours.

expert



comment

### where to get help

There may be times when the best way to resolve a problem is through professional assistance. Veterinarians, veterinary behaviourists, animal behaviourists and qualified dog trainers are amongst the best sources of assistance.

Veterinarians and veterinary nurses can help you with information on nutrition and pet health, and can be a good place to start if you're having problems with your pet that you think may be health related.

Veterinary behaviourists are veterinarians who have additional specialist qualifications relating to animal behaviour. They are the experts in this area and are able

to provide advice, recommend strategies for behaviour modification and also prescribe medication if necessary. Problems with aggression are serious and a veterinary behaviourist should always be consulted in such cases. Veterinary behaviourists can be located through the Australian Veterinary Association and the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists.

Professional dog trainers can help resolve many problem behaviours as well as helping you to train your dog to be a well-behaved companion. You should always check the qualification of any dog trainer. Canine Good Citizen (CGC) trainers undertake extensive theoretical and practical

training to become qualified. The CGC instructor's course is run by Delta Society Australia. The Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) Australia is a professional body with members that advocate pet-friendly training. APDT can help you find a professional trainer in your area.

For more information and help to locate veterinarians, veterinary behaviourists and qualified dog trainers, visit the *where to get help* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).





Jeni & Baci

# case study

## living the high life in docklands

Spending the week in a home office on the 29th floor of an apartment building in Docklands has been smooth sailing for Jeni and her two-year-old Chihuahua, Baci.

Jeni says that many of the approximately 150 apartments have a resident pet, including quite large dogs, and still being able to share your life with a pet is one of the attractions for people moving into the area.

“Many people here have downsized, coming from larger suburban properties, and they have brought their pets with them,” says Jeni.

“I have a busy work and social life so, when I decided to get a dog, I did a fair bit of research into what would work best for my lifestyle. Considerations such as the

dog’s size, the amount of exercise required, whether a dog could be content in an apartment during the week and the amount of grooming required were all important to me.

“Baci really has been the right dog for me. He has brought another dimension to my life. Caring for this little creature makes me take time out and he idolises the ground I walk on!

“Working from a home office has made it very easy to create a routine for Baci. He knows that he will have a chance to toilet outside at set times during the day and evening, and I haven’t had any problems with housetraining.

“I do sometimes take him to doggy day care if I have a long day of meetings or my niece will care for him if I have to be away overnight. In return, I look after her Chihuahua, Cosmo, when she needs it. This works very well and I’m lucky to have family who can help out when the need arises.”

Jeni says the only downside to having a dog in a high-rise apartment is that sleep-ins are a thing of the past. “I take him downstairs for a wee every morning at 6am and my day takes off from there,” she says.







# how to have fun with your pet



When people and pets do things together it's great news all round. It helps people learn to communicate more effectively with their pet and also gives animals the opportunity to learn good manners, provides exercise in a fun way and reduces boredom, which make pets easier to live with. Living in smaller spaces and in higher densities increases the need for owners to get out and about with their dogs, plus outdoor activities also help owners network with each other. There are so many activities you can share, a wide variety of sports, games and plain fun times.

## outdoor activities

Outdoor activities not only provide exercise and mental stimulation, but also help curb bad behaviours by giving your furry friend a chance to release excess energy.

- Everyone knows about "show" dogs, but did you know there are lots of performance sports for you and your dog to enjoy? "Agility" involves negotiating a course of obstacles and is the fastest growing dog sport in Australia. "Flyball" is like a relay race for teams of dogs; "earth dogs" race through tunnels underground, as well as retrieving and tracking trials. Most dogs want a job to do, so why not find out more?
- Join your local dog training club to find out what activities they offer. As well as training classes they often provide an assortment of activities and social days for dogs and owners.



## helping people

Volunteering your time can be a very rewarding activity and it's even better to do it with your pet! Have you considered training your dog and volunteering to help provide animal-assisted therapy in hospitals and other institutions? The joy and therapeutic benefit that you and your dog can bring to those in care – from the very young to frail elderly nursing-home residents – is enormous.

Delta Society Australia currently has over 700 Pet Partners (trained volunteers and their Delta-accredited pet dogs) visiting children's and adult hospitals, nursing homes, hostels, rehabilitation centres, mental health units, hospices, children with special needs and disabled residents in supported care every week.

- Visit a community family fun and pet day – your local council will advertise these events in the local paper, newsletter or website.
- Visit an outdoor café with your dog on-leash and enjoy some people watching time together.
- Many dogs love water – take them to a designated beach and dive for toys in shallow water, have a splash war, play fetch on the sand or even go for a surf together. Remember, not all dogs can swim.
- Outdoor fun isn't just for dogs. With the right preparation, cats can get in on the action too. If you have a yard with a high fence, you can take your cat out for some supervised exploring, or create a cat run with adjustable shelves and ramps to enhance play time. While some cats don't take to a leash, some will with a bit of training.

## indoor activities

Playing games with your pet is a fun and inexpensive way to bond with your furry friend. The only real expense is some treats! Games don't have to be complicated, just something

to keep you both occupied when you can't get outside for some exercise.

- Buy a chewy rope and play tug of war with your dog.
- Play hide and seek – hide yourself, toys or treats. Reward your pet with tiny treats every time they are successful in finding you. This is an excellent game for cats!
- Simon Says – use time to train new puppies to sit, stay, lay, roll, come, beg. You can also use this time to work with older pets to use a leash or follow a variety of other commands.
- Pamper your dog or cat – you'll make them feel just fabulous with a wash and a groom.

## adventure/socialisation

- Plan a pet-friendly day trip – you and your pet have several options when choosing a day trip. Some things you could do together are visiting a new dog park, hiking along a bush trail, taking an afternoon picnic together and then relaxing in the glow of a beautiful sunset.

- Holidays – with the growing trend being to take your pet on holiday, a lot of destinations have altered their policies to welcome family pets. There is a range of pet-friendly accommodation around Australia, from B&Bs to resorts, camping grounds to upmarket private hotels.
- Off-leash dog parks – parks and beaches are exciting places for dogs. A good off-leash park will provide water, shaded areas and seating, as well as bins where you can dispose of your dog's poo.
- Organise a play date – play dates are an excellent way to keep your dog's socialisation skills sharp. Find a dog park in your area to meet, or if you have your own fenced yard, invite friends or family members over with their pets. Social networking sites such as Dogtree, Doggymates or Facebook can be a great resource for finding a doggy "meet up" in your area – there are even ones based on specific breeds.

For more information on volunteering and other great activities to share with your pet, visit the *how to have fun with your pet* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).



# resources – products, services and information sources

There is no doubt that the availability of good products and services makes owning a pet in the city much easier. The following is some information on a range of products and services we think you might want to know more about. To access more detailed information about specific products and services from within each category, plus links to other pet-friendly websites, visit the *resources* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au).

## products

### boredom busters

Dogs love toys and, if bored, they can turn furniture or clothing into toys. Keep your dog busy with toys that stimulate their mind and body, and make mealtime into a game with toys that they have to work at to get their food. If you want to really make your dog work for his meal, throw a handful of kibble around the room – your dog will happily hunt down every last bit.



Cats have amazing capabilities and even though one of their favourite occupations is snoozing, they love a challenge and need toys that give them the opportunity to play. There are plenty of toys designed just for cats but you may find that a paper bag or a ball of wool is just as much of a favourite as some of the more expensive options.

A scratching post for your cat is essential if you don't want your furniture or curtains to suffer. It should be tall enough for your cat to fully stretch and have a large heavy base so it can't tip over.

Remember that not all toys are pet-friendly, even those that are intended for our four-legged friends. Avoid any toy that could possibly injure your pet, particularly if you will not be present when it is being played with. Risks to look out for include choking hazards from small parts of toys, or sticks and sharp edges that could damage your pet's mouth.

Both dogs and cats love variety so change your pet's toys regularly and join in the fun by playing with your pet and his toys. This way, you'll both learn new tricks!

## time for bed

We all appreciate a soft spot to sleep at night, although in different parts of Australia the bed may need to be warm or cool depending on the outside temperature. Fortunately, there are pet beds that are heated as well as cooled. Older pets with stiff joints will particularly appreciate a warm bed.

Beds should be machine washable and resistant to mites and fleas. Avoid beds filled with polystyrene beads and ones that have buttons or eyelets as these can be a risk to your pet.

## toileting

Puppy toilet training can be much easier with absorbent pads that are placed in the area you want your puppy to toilet. There are sprays that will attract your puppy to the spot, as well as odour eliminators that can be sprayed if there is an accident on a rug or carpet. Many dogs can be trained to use an indoor loo if they do not have access to outdoor areas, or you may prefer them to use a pet loo outside if you have a small outdoor area. If a pet loo is outside, try to keep it in an undercover area. Your dog will

be more inclined to use it and the collection container will not overflow if it rains. You will also need an area to drain and clean your pet loo.

Cat litter trays come in all shapes and sizes, and there are even products that can help you train your cat to use the toilet, if the idea appeals to you!

## pet insurance

No one likes to think of their pet being sick or requiring surgery, but it does happen and pet insurance will mean you have one less thing to worry about. Shop around, as there are many different options and it is important to know what is or isn't included.

## services

### doggy day care

If your dog spends a lot of time home alone, a good option to break up the week is to send him to doggy day care where he can socialise with other dogs and people, exercise and play as well as undertake training or assessment.





## dog walking and other support

There are people that provide individual or group dog-walking sessions, so if you feel your dog would benefit from a walk while you are at work, check what options are available in your area. Check on whether the walker has insurance, is trained in pet first aid and has an up to date police check. There are several professional associations for pet minders and walkers; members are bound by a professional ethical code.

Other services that may be available include groomers that come to you or people who will take your pet to the vet. Some councils maintain volunteer networks.

## grooming

Grooming services include everything from a basic wash to mani/pedis or even fur colouring; although dogs generally prefer to keep things fairly natural. Look for an accredited member of the Pet Industry Association of Australia and ask them about the techniques they use before selecting a groomer.

Many pets can be groomed at home quite easily. Specialised brushes for both dogs and cats will make a real difference to the

amount of hair in your house. Your vet can show you how to clip dog and cat claws, and speciality clippers make the job easy.

## travelling with pets

There are many places where you can enjoy a holiday with your pet, especially your dog. A simple search online will uncover everything from luxury inner-city options to camping in the great outdoors.

There are a range of portable accessories for your pet that will help make travelling easier, including carry cages, seat belts, dog crates that can be used for sleeping in overnight, folding bowls, walking belts that hold all the essentials, special leads and harnesses for running or biking with your dog and, of course, the indispensable doggy bag dispenser for picking up poo.

## pet sitting and boarding

If your pet isn't the travelling type, there are plenty of services that will care for your pet in your absence. Pet and house sitters, at-home minding services, boarding kennels and catteries are all options to consider.

## but wait. . .there's more. . .

We don't have enough room to cover all categories of pet products and services. Visit the *resources* section at [www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au) for much more detailed information on additional categories and specific products including cat containment systems, dog and cat doors, furniture protection, bowls, feeders and other accessories.

[www.petsinthecity.net.au](http://www.petsinthecity.net.au)





# important notice

This publication has been provided solely for information purposes to assist interested parties in reviewing the approaches to pet ownership in high-density built environments.

In preparing this publication, the Petcare Information and Advisory Service Australia Pty Ltd (PIAS) has relied on market research information and statements from independent experts which PIAS has assumed to be true and accurate in all respects and free from material omissions.

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# about PIAS

- PIAS was established in 1966 as an autonomous, non-commercial organisation committed to promoting socially responsible pet ownership.
- Funding is provided by Mars Petcare as a community service and PIAS has as its charter:
  - to educate owners on the responsibilities of pet ownership
  - to undertake original research on the relationship between man and companion animals
  - to ensure accurate and reliable information is available to all interested parties on pet-related issues
  - to encourage pet ownership in balance with society's needs, and help owners enjoy their pets
  - to provide information on and encourage the correct care of pets.
- For more information about PIAS visit [www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au)

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