

Close to [6.5 million pets](#) enter animal shelters in the United States each year. Unfortunately, due to overpopulation and lack of resources, close to [5,500 animals](#) are killed in shelters every day. In essence, fostering pets isn't just a beautiful experience, but it's also keeping pets alive.

When you choose to become a foster pet parent, you're taking home an animal that would otherwise stay at a shelter. By becoming their temporary home, you can provide them a safe environment until they find their forever home.

## First, What's the Difference Between Fostering and Rescuing Pets?

Before we discuss the importance and benefits of fostering pets, it's essential to explain the differences between rescuing and promoting:

- **Foster homes:** provide a temporary transition for pets that are waiting to find their forever homes. Foster homes help with socialization, behavioral problems and help pets be ready for adoption. Someone fostering a pet can help with feeding, grooming, health controls, vaccinations, and taking the pet to medical appointments.
- **Rescue homes:** these provide a permanent home for pets. When someone rescues a pet, they're adopting them, taking full responsibility for the pet's overall well-being and health. They're the pet's forever homes.

## The Importance of Fostering Pets

Fostering is the most effective way to reduce overcrowding in shelters, thus preventing killings and opening space for more animals to be saved. Because some pets in shelter homes have behavioral and socialization issues, a fostering environment can give them a chance to be prepared for adoption. Here, animals feel the love and support of their foster pet parents and can overcome fears, recover from trauma, and fully express their personalities – all critical factors in increasing adoption rates.

Because some pets are not accustomed to living at home, they might not know how to behave in this environment. When this happens, many pets keep going in and out of shelter homes as people don't know how to manage pets without training.

## Benefits of Fostering Pets

Fostering pets is a win-win situation that benefits everyone involved. First, it helps local shelters maintain levels of animals and accept more animals. Secondly, it allows the pets to live in a real home while they wait for adoption. Third, foster parents can enjoy the joy and pleasure of helping a pet in need.

**Increases a pet's chance of getting adopted:** since foster families can learn more about the pet's personality, they can teach them house manners and other behavioral tricks to help them get adopted faster.

**Improves a pet's social skills:** many abandoned pets have been without a human family for months or even years. Fearfulness that shows up as aggressiveness is very common. But, being in contact with humans and strangers will help your foster pet learn how to socialize.

**Saves a pet's life:** with thousands of pets being killed by shelter homes across the country, fostering a pet can save their lives and give them a second chance in life.

## How to Become a Foster Pet Parent

If you're interested in becoming a foster parent, you're also in for many benefits. First of all, fostering gives you a temporary opportunity to enjoy the company of a pet. This can also give you an idea if you're ready to get another pet or to welcome a pet into your home if you're worried.

Luckily, becoming a foster pet parent is relatively simple:

- Fill out a foster application at your local shelter
- Attend or watch the orientation program to learn more about fostering
- Set up an appointment to help you find the right foster pet
- Pick up your new foster pet to bring them home

Hosting a foster pet at your home can save a life and provide you with the joy of helping an adorable pet. The levels of gratitude and satisfaction you'll get from helping a pet in need are impossible to undermine. If you're considering fostering a pet, reach out to your local shelter to learn more about their process.

--

*Geraldine Orentas is a writer from Happy Writers, Co. in partnership with Werver, an [outdoor kitchen cabinet](#) retailer.*