

## "The Other Best Friend"

The common saying "a dog is man's best friend" may contain some truth, but dogs are not the only animal friend people enjoy. For many, a cat is their best friend. Despite what dog lovers may believe, cats, too, make excellent house pets as they are good companions, civilized, and easy to care for.

In the first place, people enjoy the companionship of cats. Many cats are affectionate. They will snuggle up and ask to be petted or scratched under their chin. Who can resist a purring cat? If they're not feeling affectionate, cats are generally quite playful. They love to chase balls and feathers or just about anything dangling from a string. They especially enjoy playing when their owners are participating in the game. Contrary to popular opinion, cats can be trained. Using rewards and punishments, just like with a dog, a cat can be trained to follow commands such as fetch or sit and perform tricks such as jumping through a hoop or doing flips! Companionship by any means is great, but with cats, it's truly unconditional.

Secondly, cats are very civilized creatures. Unlike dogs, cats do not bark or make other loud noises. Most cats don't even meow very often. They generally lead a quiet existence. Cats also don't often have "accidents." Mother cats train their kittens to use the litter box, and most cats will use it without fail from that time on. Even stray cats usually understand the concept when shown the box and will use it regularly. Best of all, cats are not as dangerous as dogs. You seldom, if ever, hear about cats being responsible for vicious attacks on humans. When was the last time you read a news headline that stated "Pet Cat Mauls Human to Death," or heard about someone in the hospital with sixty-seven stitches to the face to reattach ears or replace lips? Because cats are so civilized, you will almost think they are human.

Lastly, one of the most attractive features of cats is their ease of care. Cats do not have to be walked. They get plenty of exercise in the house as they play. Cats also take care of their own grooming. Bathing a cat is almost never necessary because they clean themselves. Cats are more particular about personal cleanliness than even some people. In addition, cats can be left home alone for a few hours without fear. Unlike some pets, most cats will not destroy the home furnishings. A tall scratching post in a favorite cat area of the house will often keep the cat content until their owners return. Because cats are so easy to care for, you might want to give owning a cat a second thought.

In closing, cats are low maintenance, civilized companions. People who have small living quarters or less time for pet care should appreciate these characteristics of cats. These aspects make cats the purrrfect pet!