



Should You Get a Cat or a Dog?

By: Katherine Brown

Should I get a cat or a dog? If you've ever gotten a pet before, you might've asked yourself this question at some point. While both animals are great companions, they do have differences. Depending on your needs as an owner, you might find that one suits you better than the other. When picking which pet to get, there are factors to consider to ensure it's the best fit for both you and your new furry buddy.

Activity

Dogs need lots of exercise and lively activity. An article notes that, "If you're an energetic "outdoorsy" type who loves keeping active, a dog may be the right choice for you" (Purina, p.1). Going on a walk, playing fetch, or a tug-of-war are great activities to engage in with your dog. If you are a less active person, a cat might be more your style. An article writes, "They don't need

walking, so cats are often well-suited to less active people” (Purina, p.1). However, cats do enjoy playing and need stimulation.

Expenses

While any animal can be expensive, dogs tend to cost more than cats. It’s important to take this into consideration when picking an animal. An article writes that, “Dogs often tend to be more expensive to care for than a cat between food, toys, training classes, daycare, and vet bills” (Hill’s Pet, 2016, p.1). If the decision on which pet to get is largely based on which one you can afford, a cat would be the best way to go. If the cost wouldn’t matter to you, a dog would be a great decision as well.

Living Space

If you own a large space, such as a house or backyard, a dog might be well-suited to you. Dogs need adequate space to run around and play in. “Dogs need lots of stimulation, fresh air and regular walks, so they’re best suited to people who have a garden, live in rural areas or have easy access to parks and open spaces” (Purina, p.1). On the other hand, if you live in a small apartment or otherwise small space, a cat might fit you better. Cats need stimulation, but they don’t exercise in the same way that dogs do. “Cats generally get their exercise through play (an excellent bonding opportunity between you and your cat) and through their general hunting nature where they will stalk prey (toys in this case) and leap up high in trees (cat trees that is). Because of this, cats don’t usually need as much area to roam around” (Hill’s Pet, 2016, p.1).

Lifestyle

If you work long hours, travel, or are on-the-go a lot, a cat might suit you. Cats are generally independent creatures, and they are happy to entertain themselves for extended periods of time. However, they do need social interaction. On the other hand, dogs are pack animals, and they don’t fare well by themselves for long stretches of time. “This pack mentality also makes it really hard on dogs to be left alone, especially for long periods of time. Dogs crave closeness and attention” (Hill’s Pet, 2016, p.1). Dogs are social creatures.

Whichever pet you choose, know that both a cat and a dog have the potential to be an amazing companion to you!

References

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