

What's the Point?

Why do people have pets?

Man's best friend is not a friendly neighbor, or even his loving wife. As everyone knows, man's best friend is his dog. People have a special place in their hearts for their ever-faithful pets. Millions of households have included into the family the traditional dogs and cats. Others favor different pets such as birds, rodents, and fish. Some families are even more unique, choosing snakes, lizards, or even monkeys as a pet.

Today, the pet population in the United States alone is around nearing the billion mark. Nearly 100 million households own a cat or a dog (and nearly half of those households own two or more). What's so great about pets that so many people want to have one? They aren't always well-behaved, they don't do household chores, and they can't carry on an intelligent conversation? In this day and age, the usual reason to have pets is for the company. If you have a bad day at work – they don't care. If you flunk a test – they don't care. If you get a bad haircut – they don't care. In short, they love you unconditionally and only ask that you love them back.

Of course, life wasn't always so easy for the household pet. They used to have to do chores just like everyone else (i.e. a cat would have to catch rodents in the barn or a dog would have to help with the hunting). Nowadays, a pet is rarely brought in to fulfill an actual useful purpose. Instead, its job is usually just to be a good friend.