

# Cats, Dogs and Us





## Objectives

The lessons in this programme meet learning objectives in language arts and science. Among other programme goals, students will learn social studies and life science concepts, practise critical reading and comprehension strategies, and engage in role-play activities to encourage empathy for cats and dogs.

Numerous studies have found that environmental education programmes like ours improve critical thinking skills, motivate students to become more engaged, and promote academic achievement, including better performance on standardised tests.

There's also documented evidence that integrating humane education into the classroom can lead to reductions in school violence and bullying, while supporting moral development and instilling a sense of responsibility for others, both animals and people.

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## Companion Video

The educational video for this programme runs for approximately 18 minutes. Find it online at [www.ifaw.org/cats-dogs-and-us-au](http://www.ifaw.org/cats-dogs-and-us-au)

## Online Library

IFAW's education library with free resources on a variety of animals and conservation themes: [www.ifaw.org/lesson-plans-au](http://www.ifaw.org/lesson-plans-au)

## How to Use This Programme

*Cats, Dogs and Us* aims to educate students about the characteristics of cats and dogs, the unique relationships cats and dogs have with people in communities around the world, and the important responsibility people have in caring for the needs of cats and dogs.

Depending on the lessons and activities you choose, you may teach one or two lessons as stand-alone activities or the programme may be taught as a one- to two-week unit. Here is one possible approach to teaching the programme:

### Reading the Student Magazine: Teaching Guide, Student Magazine

- **Preview the Student Magazine:** Introduce the Student Magazine using the activities and discussion questions in “Before Reading *Cats, Dogs and Us*” in the Teaching Guide.
- **Option 1:** On the first day, read through the whole Student Magazine with students following along. Over the next few days, read and discuss pages of the magazine separately, using the activities in the “Read and Discuss” sections of the Teaching Guide.
- **Option 2:** After previewing the Student Magazine, read and discuss pages of the magazine separately, using the “Read and Discuss” sections in the Teaching Guide. You may choose to work through one or two of the “Read and Discuss” sections each day.

### My Book about Cats and Dogs: Teaching Guide, Student Worksheets

Students will create their own booklet about cats and dogs using Student Worksheets 1–5 as they read the Student Magazine. You may choose to have students begin these pages during class time and then finish them for homework. When students have finished their books, you may have them share their books with partners or in small groups. Another option is to display the books in the room and have a time for students to walk around and read each other's books. At the end of the unit, have students take their books home to share with their families.

### Extension Activities: Teaching Guide

These activities extend the concepts learned during reading and discussion of the Student Magazine pages and connect to subject areas such as science, social studies, and maths. Some extension activities may be done as homework while others are whole- or small-group activities. You may choose which extension activities to teach depending on the needs of your students and your educational objectives.

### Take Action: Take Action Leaflet

Suggestions for responsible individual and group action on cat and dog issues can be found in the supplemental *Take Action* flyer. Bring parents on board for the *Stand Up for Cats and Dogs Pledge*. For more information, download the *Take Action* flyer at: [www.ifaw.org/cats-dogs-and-us-au](http://www.ifaw.org/cats-dogs-and-us-au)

### Tell Us What You Think

Send us your feedback so we can continue to improve and enhance our program and resources. Visit [www.ifaw.org/teacher-feedback-au](http://www.ifaw.org/teacher-feedback-au)

## Animal Action Education

Every two years, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) launches a new thematic education programme focusing on animals and the environment. Free educational materials are locally adapted for free distribution in a dozen languages and dialects - including Braille - and more than 18 countries, reaching some 5,000,000 young people worldwide each year. For more information about IFAW and the Animal Action Education programme, visit [www.ifaw.org](http://www.ifaw.org). You can also e-mail [info-au@ifaw.org](mailto:info-au@ifaw.org) or call 1800 00 4329



## Ground Rules Activity

Prior to discussions that may involve strong views or feelings, many teachers and students like to develop ground rules within their classrooms to promote positive listening, respect, and sensitivity to different points of view.

Ask the class to pair up and answer the following question: “When we talk about something we care about a lot, how do we want listeners to act?”

Ask the pairs to move into groups of six and share their ideas. Have them make a list of the behaviors that all six can understand and agree with. These may include:

1. They listen to me.
2. They don't laugh.
3. They don't shout what I say to other people.

Gather the whole class and ask each group to report their list - one behavior at a time. Check for understanding and agreement with the whole class. Only write down those behaviours that everybody accepts and understands.

Steer the group toward identifying clearly observable behaviours rather than broad concepts. Display the list as a means to encourage individuals to take responsibility for their actions within the group.



# Teaching Guide

**Overview:** Students will read, discuss, and explore the *Cats, Dogs and Us* Student Magazine and create their own “My Book about Cats and Dogs” to keep.

Through a variety of activities and discussions, students will analyse the special relationship people have with cats and dogs, develop essential vocabulary about the topic, and understand how humans support these animals. The guide includes suggestions for extension activities.

**Learning Outcomes:** Students will:

- Use vocabulary relevant to the topic of caring for cats and dogs in reading, oral discussion, role-play, and writing.
- Analyse the basic needs of cats and dogs and understand how humans provide for these basic needs.
- Describe connections between cats and dogs and humans.
- Understand how cats and dogs communicate.
- Demonstrate that they are positively inspired by cats and dogs through language and artistic expression.

## Before Reading *Cats, Dogs and Us*

1. **Think-Pair-Share:** Have students turn to a partner and talk about what they know about cats and dogs and how they feel about them. Ask several pairs to share what they talked about.
2. **Preview the Text:** Give students a copy of the Student Magazine. Read aloud the title *Cats, Dogs and Us*.
  - Ask: *Why do you think the title refers to “us”? What do you think this magazine is about?*
  - Preview the headings with students and talk about the photographs on each page. Point out the picture of the cat with labels on Student Magazine page 2 and the picture of the dog with labels on page 4. Ask students what they think the pictures show.
  - Point out the words in bold. Tell students that these are important words that will help them understand more about cats and dogs. Explain that these words are in the glossary on page 8.



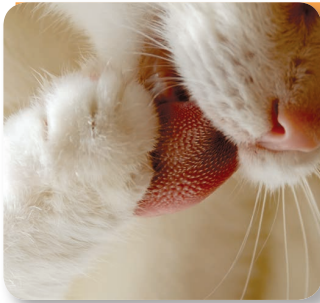
## Read and Discuss Page 1

1. **Vocabulary:** Draw attention to the glossary words on page 1. Read aloud the words and ask students if they know what they mean. Have them turn to the glossary, find the words, and follow along as you read the definitions.
2. Ask the following questions to help clarify the meanings:
  - *What kind of relationship do you have with your brother/sister/best friend?*
  - *Are wolves and bears domesticated? How do you know?*
  - *What are some domesticated animals?*
3. **Read:** Read the page aloud as students follow along. Some students may be able to read the page independently.
4. **Discuss:** *What did we learn about how cats and dogs make our lives better? Show me where it says this in the text. What kind of deal have people made with cats and dogs?*
5. **My Book about Cats and Dogs:**
  - Give students **Student Worksheets 1–5**. Explain that they will make a book about cats and dogs as they read each section of the Student Magazine.
  - To start, have students staple the pages together in order, with the cover page first. Invite them to decorate and write their names on the cover of their booklet.
  - Have students turn to **Student Worksheet 2** in their cats and dogs booklet. *We talked about how cats and dogs help make our lives better. Think about a cat or dog that you know or a cat or dog that you would like to know. Draw a picture that shows a way that the cat or dog can make your life better. Write about your picture.*

# Cats, Dogs and Us

## Extension Activity

**Domestic and Wild Animals:** Show students a picture of a domestic cat and a wild cat, such as a tiger. Do a Think-Pair-Share activity, in which students first think about how the two animals are the same and different, then discuss it with a partner, and then share their ideas with the whole group. Encourage students to consider their relationship with domestic animals as compared to wild animals. Ask students to name other animals and decide as a group whether they are domestic or wild. Chart the responses.



## Read and Discuss Pages 2 and 4

### 1. Scientific Drawing:

- Ask students to work in small groups. Have each group observe a photograph of a cat or dog. Tell students to notice details about the cat's or dog's physical features.

- Ask each group to create a simple drawing of the cat or dog on a large sheet of paper. Have group members decide on the most important physical features of their animal. Have students label these features on their sketch, drawing lines from the label to the body part.
- Have the groups discuss why they think each feature is important to the cat or dog.
- With younger students, you could do this activity as a whole group, with you drawing the sketches and students deciding what labels to add.

2. **Vocabulary:** Have students search pages 2 and 4 for words in bold. Read aloud the words and ask students if they know what the words mean. Have them turn to the glossary, find the words, and follow along as you read the definitions. Ask the following questions to help clarify the meanings:

- *What prey do cats like to catch and eat?*
- *What animals live in packs?*
- *What is one dog breed that you know?*

3. **Read:** Read aloud pages 2 and 4 as students follow along or choral read with you. Some students may be able to read the pages independently.

4. **Answer Questions:** Have students look at the photographs and captions to answer questions about the physical features of cats and dogs. Students may work with a partner to find the answers, or you may work with the whole group. Ask questions such as the following:

- *How do cats use their tails?*
- *What is special about cats' eyes?*
- *How do whiskers help cats?*
- *Why do cats have hooks on their tongues?*
- *Why can cats walk quietly?*
- *What is one thing that is the same about cat's and dog's paws?*
- *Why do dogs pant?*
- *Why do dogs sniff?*
- *How does a dog use its tail?*

5. **My Book about Cats and Dogs:** Have students turn to **Student Worksheet 3** of their cats and dogs booklet. Ask them to draw a picture of a cat and label one of the cat's physical features. Ask students to write what the physical feature helps the cat do. Then, have students complete the same activity for dogs.

## Extension Activity

**Observation:** Have students observe a cat or a dog at their home or, with their parents or guardians' permission and supervision, in their community. Ask students to observe the cat or dog for a few minutes and notice how the animal moves and uses its senses. Older or more advanced students may take notes about their observations. Have students report their observations to the whole class.



## Read and Discuss Pages 3 and 5

1. **Think-Pair-Share:** Ask students to turn to a partner and talk about how they think cats and dogs "talk" to people and to each other. Ask partners to share ideas with the class.

2. **Role-Play:** Give a student a simple message to communicate, such as "I would like a drink of water." Ask the student to communicate the message to the group nonverbally. Have the other students guess the message. Repeat with other simple messages. Then ask students:
- *How did it feel to try to "talk" without words?*
  - *How did you feel when you were not understood?*
  - *How did you feel when someone guessed your message?*
3. **Read:** Read aloud pages 3 and 5 as students follow along or choral read with you.



# Cats, Dogs and Us

## 4. Discuss:

- Talk about the cat myths on page 3. Explain the meaning of the phrase “nine lives”. Discuss with students why these beliefs about cats aren’t true and why it can be a problem if people think the myths are true.
- Ask students what they notice about the dogs’ body language in the photographs on page 5. Discuss how students can recognise how the dogs are feeling and what they are trying to communicate. Hint: You can tell what a dog is trying to communicate by looking at the dog’s tail, fur, ears, mouth, eyes, and posture. Ask students whether and how they would approach each of these dogs.

5. **My Book about Cats and Dogs:** Have students complete **Student Worksheet 4** in their booklet by drawing and writing about how a cat or dog communicates with them.

## Extension Activities

**Meeting a Dog:** Ask pairs of students to role-play meeting a dog, with one partner taking the role of the dog and the other the role of a child meeting the dog for the first time. First, have pairs role-play how *not* to meet a dog. Then, have pairs role-play the safe way to meet a dog.

**Write a Letter:** Write a short letter from a cat’s point of view explaining how he or she feels about one of the cat myths. The letter may be addressed to an imaginary family or to a community. Students may write the letter as a whole group, in pairs, or individually, depending on their level.



## Read and Discuss Pages 6 and 7

1. **Discuss:** Guide students to recognise the needs of cats and dogs and how those needs are similar to our own.

- Put items into a bag to

represent the needs: food, water, shelter, exercise/play, medical care, and kindness. For example, you could use a water bottle and a water bowl; a child’s toy and a cat’s or dog’s toy; photos of people with friends and photos of dogs with their friends, and so on.

- Ask students what they need to drink every day. Take the water bottle out as students guess water. Then take out the animal’s water bowl and point out that cats and dogs need water every day too.
- Continue in this manner, discussing each need and comparing how people meet these needs and how cats and dogs have these needs met.

2. **Concept Web:** Create a concept web on the board or chart paper showing the things cats and dogs need.

3. **Vocabulary:** Have students search pages 6 and 7 for words in bold. Read aloud the words and ask students if they know what the words mean. Have them turn to the glossary, find the words, and follow along as you read the definitions. Ask the following questions to help clarify the meanings:

- *What is one responsibility you have at home? At school?*
- *What can you find in your community?*

4. **Read:** Read aloud pages 6 and 7 as students follow along or choral read with you. Some students may be able to read the pages independently.

5. **My Book about Cats and Dogs:** Have students work on **Student Worksheet 5** in their booklet. Tell them to think about their own cat or dog or imagine that they are responsible for a cat or a dog. Have them draw and write about what they need to do to take good care of the cat or dog.

## Extension Activities

- **Role-Play:** Have students work with a partner. Ask one student to take the role of a cat or dog and the other student the role of the caregiver. Have them role-play caring for the cat or dog. Call on several partners to present their role-play for the class.
- **Shelter:** Have students design and draw a shelter for a cat or a dog. Explain that a shelter needs to protect the cat or dog from rain, wind, hot sun, and biting insects. It needs at least three sides, a roof, and should be off the ground. Encourage students to be imaginative as they create the shelter, but to make sure that it meets these requirements.
- **Bar Graph:** Have students build a bar graph to show how many of them help take care of cats and how many help take care of dogs.
  - Briefly discuss different ways people can care for cats and dogs (at their homes or as part of a community).
  - Ask students who help take care of cats to raise their hands. Then ask students who help take care of dogs to raise their hands.
  - Draw a horizontal line on the board and write the words “Cares for Cats” and “Cares for Dogs” under the line. Give each student a sticky note or note card (or two sticky notes/note cards if they take care of both cats and dogs).
  - Ask students to write their names on the sticky notes and then place them above the label to make the columns of a bar graph. Compare the two columns. Discuss whether there are more students who take care of cats or more who take care of dogs.



# My Book



## about Cats and Dogs

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for a student to draw or write about cats and dogs.

By \_\_\_\_\_





# Cats and Dogs Can Make Our Lives Better



Draw one way a cat or a dog can make your life better.

This \_\_\_\_\_ makes me feel better because

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.



# Animal Features

**Draw a cat. Write a label  
for one of its body parts.**

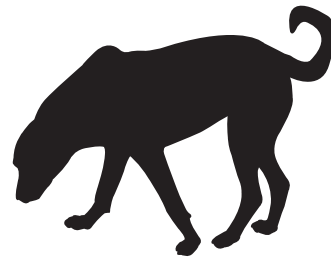


**The cat uses**

\_\_\_\_\_

**to** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Draw a dog. Write a label  
for one of its body parts.**



**The dog uses**

\_\_\_\_\_

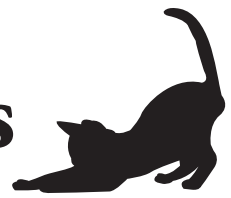
**to** \_\_\_\_\_.







# Talk to the Animals



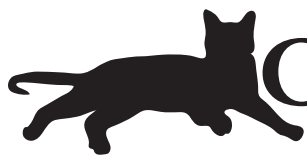
Draw how a cat or dog talks to you.

This \_\_\_\_\_ is telling me \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

by \_\_\_\_\_.





# Caring for a Cat or Dog



Draw what you need to do to take good care of a cat or dog.

I take care of \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.



# Cats, Dogs and Us

Student Magazine



Cats and dogs share a special **relationship** with us. They live with people in almost every place in the world.

They were **domesticated** long ago. That means they lived closely with people, and over thousands of years, they changed so they were no longer wild.

Cats and dogs make our lives better. They give us love and teach us to be kind. Some dogs help people by hunting, herding sheep, or pulling loads through the snow. Some cats help people by catching rodents. In these ways, cats and dogs help people be happier and healthier.

People have made a deal with cats and dogs. They help us, so we must take good care of them. When the animals around us are happy and healthy, we are happy and healthy. We all win!



Cats and dogs have lived with people for thousands of years.



# The Incredible Cat

Cats are amazing animals. People have admired cats for thousands of years. Ancient Egyptians worshipped cats. They even made them into mummies! Vikings kept cats on their ships as hunters and friends. The Islamic Prophet Muhammad loved cats. In some places, cats are a sign of good luck.

A cat's body is built for hunting. Like their cat cousins - leopards, tigers and jaguars - cats sneak up on **prey**, then pounce! Mostly, cats hunt at dusk or nighttime. Even though they can hunt, cats still need us to care for them.

Cats sleep a lot. They are saving up their energy. Cats use bursts of energy to hunt.



## Eyes

Cats' eyes help them see well in the dark.

## Ears

Cats have excellent hearing. Their ears move around to pick up sounds from all directions.

## Tail

Cats' tails flex and bend. Their tails help them keep their balance.

## Whiskers

Whiskers help cats feel where they are, even in the dark.

## Tongue

A cat's tongue is scratchy. It has tiny hooks that help them clean themselves.



## Legs

Strong legs help cats run fast, then pounce. Cats can leap high.

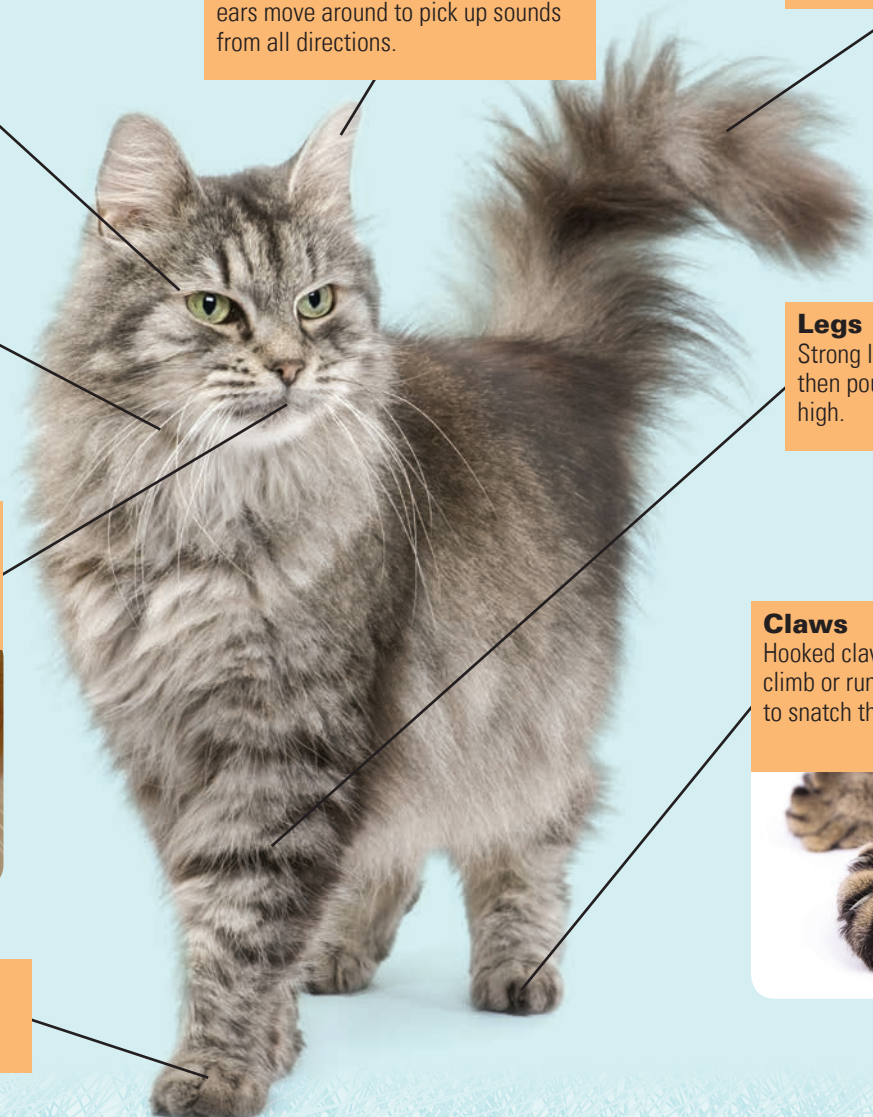
## Claws

Hooked claws grip when cats climb or run. Cats use their claws to snatch their prey too.



## Paws

Cats walk silently on padded toes.







Cats lick their fur to keep clean.

## Cat Talk

Of course, cats can't talk. But they have many ways of saying how they feel or what they need. They may hiss or growl to chase another cat away. Or, they may touch nose-to-nose to introduce themselves. If they want to play, they may roll over, belly up!

A cat that wants to be petted may rub her chin against you. A long, slow blink means "I like you!" Cats purr to tell you they are relaxed and happy. But they also purr when they are frightened or in pain. At those times, purring may help them feel better.

A cat that arches her back with her fur raised is trying to look big and threatening. She is saying, "I'm scared. Please leave me alone!" The cat may scratch you if you corner her. Be careful!

Cats might seem mysterious. This has led to some stories about cats. But are they true?

Cat Myth	The Truth
Cats have nine lives.	Cats have just one life, so take good care of them!
Black cats are evil or bad luck.	Black cats are like any other cat. They are all wonderful!
Cats always land on their feet.	Cats often land on their feet. But they can be hurt if they fall from a high place.





### Ears

Some ears stand up. Others flop down. Dogs hear very well and can hear higher sounds than humans can.

### Nose

Dogs have an amazing sense of smell - 10,000 times better than humans.

### What's all the sniffing about?

Dogs learn a lot through smell.

It's likely they learn about another

dog's age, mood, health, and whether the dog is a male or female.

They learn these things about you when they sniff you too!



### Tail

Dogs use their tails for balance. They also use their tails to talk! A fast-wagging tail usually says, "I'm excited!"

### Fur

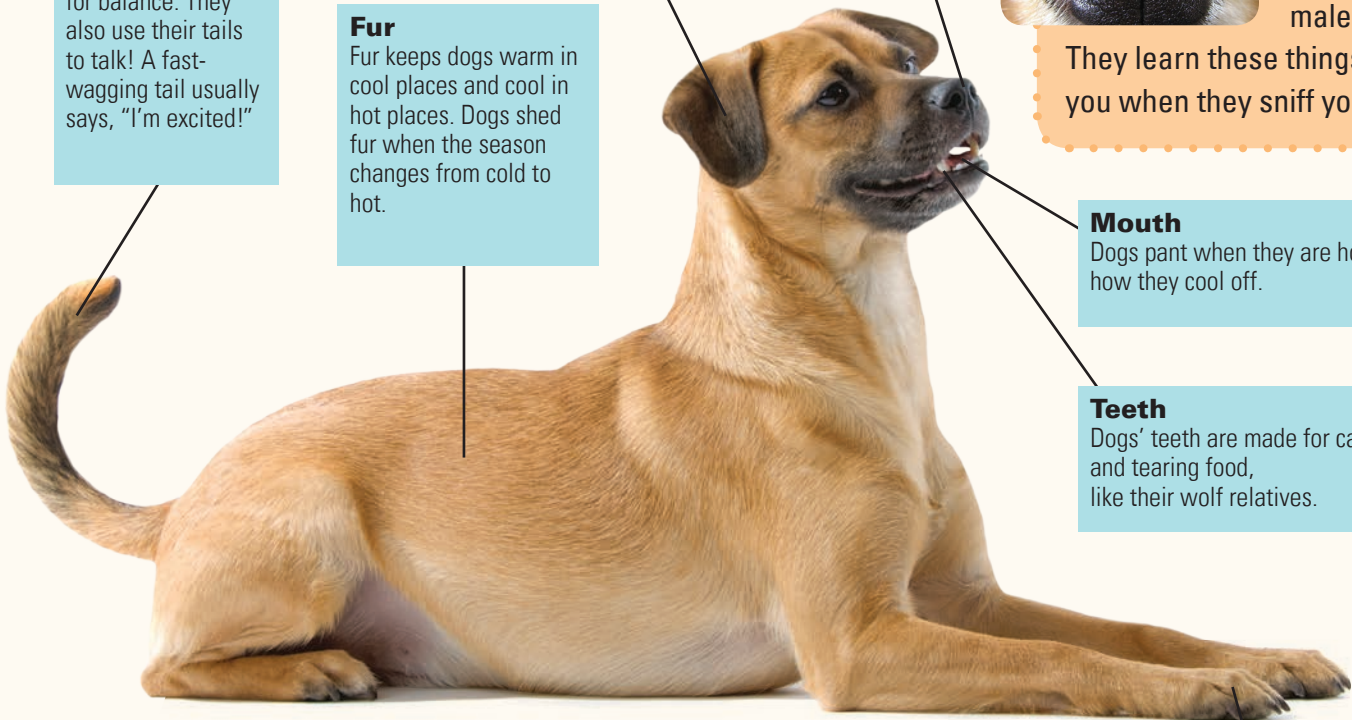
Fur keeps dogs warm in cool places and cool in hot places. Dogs shed fur when the season changes from cold to hot.

### Mouth

Dogs pant when they are hot. That's how they cool off.

### Teeth

Dogs' teeth are made for catching and tearing food, like their wolf relatives.



### Paws

Dogs have pads on their paws. The pads are cushions for the dog's feet.

## The Excellent Dog

Dogs' closest relatives are wolves. Wolves live in groups called **packs**. Wolves in the pack take care of each other. Dogs do this too when they live with people. They guard their home by barking at strangers or other dogs. They show affection by coming close to be petted. Dogs, like wolves, love to play.

Some dogs look like wolves, but most don't. Some are so small they could fit in your hands. Some are as tall as a three year old child. There are many **breeds** of dogs, and they are all different sizes and shapes.

Thousands of years ago, wolves probably figured out that human campfires meant nearby food. These wolves helped early humans hunt. Wolves and humans worked together. Gradually, some wolves became the domesticated dogs we know today.





# Dog Talk

Dogs have feelings, just like people do. The way they hold their bodies tells us how they feel.

A dog that's afraid may have his ears pressed close to his head. His tail may be down or even tucked under his body. He may be crouching. Dogs that are afraid want to be left alone.

When a dog is angry or feels he is in danger, the fur on his neck may stand up. His eyes are wide open. He may show her teeth and growl. Stay away from dogs that look like this.

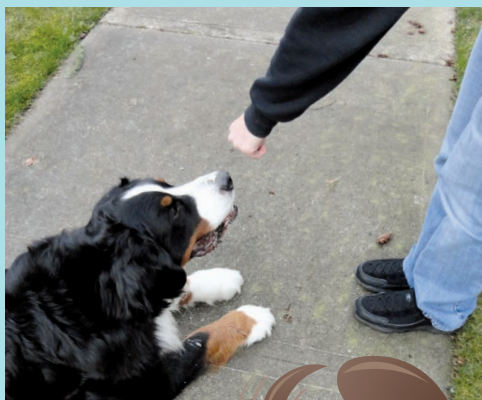
A dog with a relaxed face and loose, wiggly body is happy. If his front legs are near the ground and his backside is up, he wants to play!



## How to Meet a Dog

Make sure you only greet a dog that wants to greet you!

1. If the dog's owner is nearby, ask if it's OK to pet the dog. If a dog is tied up or wandering by himself, leave him alone.
2. Once you have the OK from the owner, let the dog sniff the back of your hand. He will learn a bit about you and feel more comfortable.
3. If the dog gives a "happy wag" of his tail (the tail is high and wagging fast) and noses forward, he wants to meet you!



A dog will be most comfortable if you pet his chin or side.



# Taking Care of Cats and Dogs

When domestic animals live with people, they depend on us. We have a **responsibility** to the cats and dogs that live among us. One person, a family, or a whole **community** might take care of them.

No matter who takes care of cats and dogs, they all need the same things:

## A “Soup Kitchen” for Pets

In Germany, some people have trouble paying for food for their dogs and cats. That’s why IFAW works with Tiertafel, a “soup kitchen” that gives away food for cats and dogs.



**1** Food and water



**4** Exercise and play



**2** Shelter from the sun and the cold

**3** Care when they are sick or hurt



**5** Kindness





### **CLAW Saturday Club**

In South Africa, children have a place to bring their dogs on Saturday afternoons. It's the CLAW Saturday Club. IFAW helps teach the children how to take care of their dogs. The children also do crafts and have something to eat.

Cats and dogs make our lives better. Like our family and friends, they can make us smile when we are sad or lonely. Some protect us and some help us get jobs done. Like neighbours, they are an important part of our communities. When we take time to understand them, they teach us a little about other animals.

We owe them our best care. When cats and dogs are happy and healthy, people are happy and healthy. This is the deal of domestication. And it works!





## Glossary

**Breeds:** groups of animals within a species that are alike in how they look and act.

**Community:** a group of people who live near each other or share the same beliefs, traditions, and way of life.

**Domesticated:** when animals have lived so closely with people that they have changed over thousands of years so they are no longer wild and need people to take care of them.

**Packs:** groups of dogs that live together.

**Prey:** an animal that is hunted by another animal.

**Relationship:** the way two or more living things get along.

**Responsibility:** something people must do because it is the right thing to do.