

BY LUCIFER - THE UNIVERSITY
OF CANBERRA



***BRINGING HOME A
NEW PET:
RESPONSIBLE PET
OWNER GUIDE***

Abstract

Whether it's a baby pup or a sweet old senior puppy, there are few things in life more heartwarming than adopting a pet in Canberra and giving it the loving home it deserves. Like any new adventure, though, there are plenty of considerations and accommodations that need to be made before a new pet can comfortably and safely enter your home in Canberra. You want to be sure you're making the best preparations for this four-legged family member.

1. Introduction

Before welcoming your pet, it becomes essential for you to become a responsible pet owner in Canberra. If you want to become a responsible pet parent, then you have come to the right place. We are here with this new and the latest PDF that may be very helpful and informative for you. Here, you are going to know the responsible pet owner guide that you should know.

2. Pet Checklist: 5 Things Every Pet Owner Must Have

If you're reading this, chances are you're welcoming a new furry friend to your household in Canberra.

Bringing home a new dog or cat can be both an exciting and stressful experience. You might be ready for the challenge (but worry you don't have everything you need for the best care).

Here are five things every pet owner in Canberra should get before bringing their new best friend home.

1. An ID Tag

Animals can be unpredictable, so it's important to get an ID tag with your contact details just in case your new pet runs off. Make sure it's the first thing you fasten to your pet's collar when you bring your furry pal home. There's also the option of getting a microchip – a small device injected in your pet's back. It stores contact information that can easily be retrieved with a scan of a code. Should your pet go missing and wind up at a shelter, staff can use it to reunite you two.

2. Pet insurance

In case something does happen to your furry friend, it's important to have pet insurance in place.

3. A good bed

Fleece or sheepskin beds will keep your little one warm but don't invest in anything too elaborate until your pet has overcome the "ripping everything to shreds" A blanket, towel or your bed will have to do until then!

4. Pet tidy bags

If your dog makes a mess, you clean it up and stash it in your bags for disposal. Now, they come in handy dispensers that can tie onto your dog's leash or belt (which makes it much easier to be a responsible dog owner!)

5. Toys

Dogs need activities to keep them entertained and their minds stimulated.

Entertain your furry friends for hours with Happy Tails Squeaking Toys! Available in a variety of different designs and materials, there's a toy for every pet.

3. Questions to Ask When Buying Pet Insurance



Pet insurance is a way to help you pay for certain veterinary costs and is coverage that many insurance companies offer. It covers healthcare costs for pets just like health insurance covers medical costs for people. If you are looking for pet insurance in Canberra, it can be hard to figure out which plan is best for you and your pet.

Here are the top 10 questions you should ask when buying pet insurance.

10 Questions to Ask Before Buying Pet Insurance

Am I Looking for a Pet Health Discount Plan or a Comprehensive Insurance Plan?

In a discount fee plan, you pay an annual fee. When you take your pet in for care, you get covered services for less. For instance, a checkup might cost \$100, but you would only pay \$80.

A pet health insurance plan in Canberra might cover your pet in the way your plan covers you. You pay a monthly premium for the insurance. The insurance covers specific conditions or types of visits. When you take your pet to the vet, you pay a deductible (or co-payment), and the insurance pays for the rest.

Will I Get to Choose My Vet?

Whether you can choose your vet or not depends on the provider and type of coverage you choose. For instance, Pet Assure offers discount plans. The company created a network of over 5,600

veterinarians in 50 states.¹ If you choose this plan, you'll need to go to one of the participating vets to get your discounts.

Pumpkin Pet Insurance lets you go to the vet of your choice. You need to pay for the care upfront and then file a claim. The company will reimburse you for the amount covered by the policy you have.²

What Are the Waiting Periods?

It is important to know when your coverage starts so that you don't take your pet in for treatment when they aren't covered. Like all insurance, there may be a waiting period for the policy to take effect.

Each provider will have waiting periods that differ by condition. Most commonly, and depending on the condition, you'll need to wait anywhere between a few days and one month for:

Illnesses: Typically 14 days

Accidents: Typically a few days

Specific conditions: Varies between 14 days and several months, depending on the condition.

Note

Pet insurance plan costs in Canberra can increase with your pet's age, so it's best to enroll them when they are young and healthy.

What Doesn't the Plan Cover?

Plans will vary in the conditions they cover. Like our healthcare plans, your pet's plan might not cover pre-existing conditions or hereditary problems, but you might be able to pay extra to cover a condition. Talk to the plan provider, and find out whether there are special cases or extras that you can pay for.

Does the Plan Cover Routine Wellness Care?

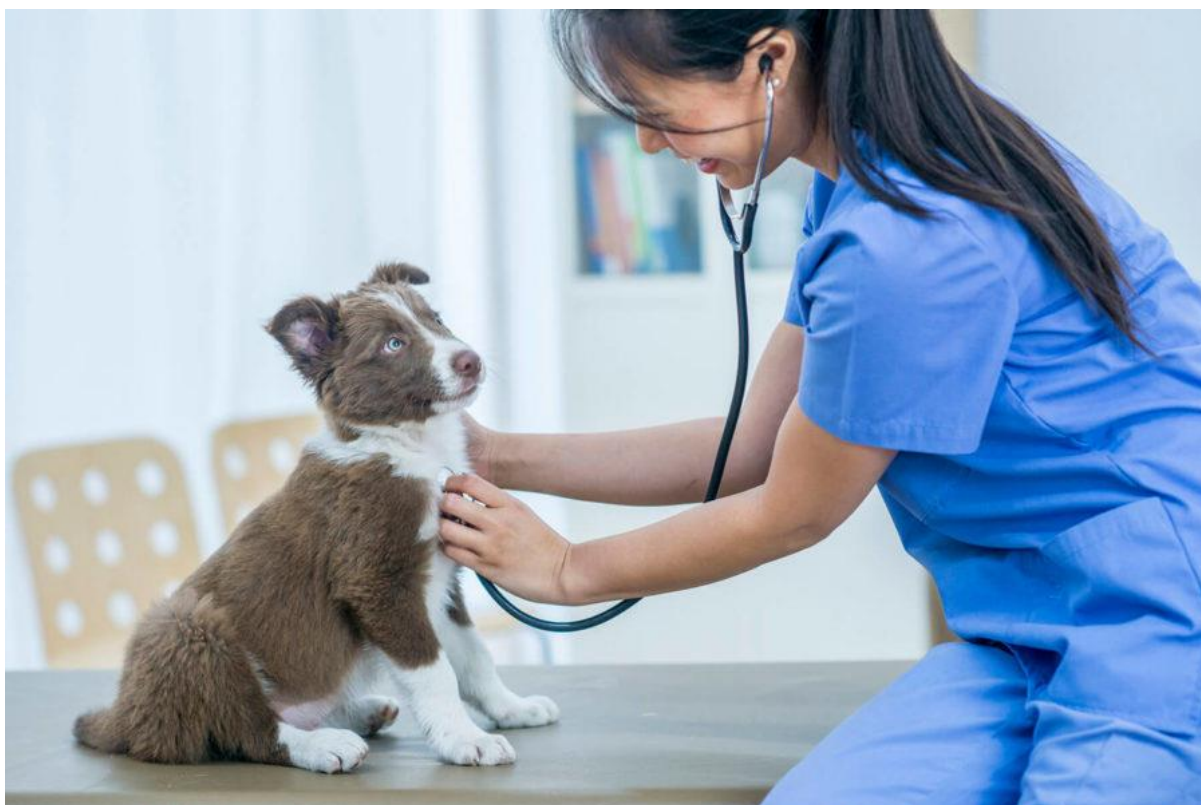
If you are looking for a comprehensive policy in Canberra, ask whether it covers routine visits such as immunizations, dental care, and heartworm testing. These are often considered to be wellness care services, and you might be able to add them to your policy for an additional monthly fee.

Is Neutering or Spaying Covered?

Spaying and neutering coverage is great to have, since most pet owners use this service. This is not included in basic illness and accident pet insurance programs but is available in some wellness and preventative care pet insurance plans.

Does It Include Prescription Coverage?

Pet medications are just as expensive as ours are. Some policies will cover prescriptions, while others offer it as an add-on. For instance, ASPCA Pet Health Insurance and Trupanion both cover prescriptions.³ PetsBest covers prescriptions in its Accident Only plan. To get prescription coverage for illnesses with PetBest, you'd need to buy the Accident and Illness plan and add prescription coverage.



Do I Have to Pay a Deductible?

The deductible is what you have to pay out of pocket before the insurance kicks in. Just like human healthcare plans, deductibles vary by plan and how much you choose to pay. This means you'll want to find a plan that carries a deductible you can afford. Keep in mind that smaller deductibles come with higher premiums. If you take a higher deductible, you can lower the monthly costs of the plan.

Most pet insurance plans reimburse you rather than paying the rest after you pay your deductible. If you have a pet insurance plan, you take your pet in for care and pay for the services upfront. You would then submit a claim to your provider, with the records if required, and they would reimburse you for the amount they are responsible for.

Note

Make sure you save up enough to pay for your pet's care before needing it, and talk to your provider before any procedures.

If your pet is aging, or you often bring them to the vet, it might make sense to choose the lower deductible and higher monthly payments. This can reduce your overall costs if your pet needs more care.

Are There Any Illness or Incident Caps?

A cap is a limit on how much a provider will pay over a period. Most pet insurance has a cap on annual or lifetime amounts, but they typically don't have caps on specific treatments or illnesses. For instance, ASPCA Pet Health Insurance has annual limits that depend on the plan you get. You can choose plans with limits between \$5,000 and \$20,000 in \$5,000 increments.⁵ In comparison, Trupanion has no limit on how much its policies payout.

Is the Company Reputable and Giving Me All the Answers?

You should check on the Better Business Bureau website for the provider to make sure you know about any formal complaints that have been filed. You could also look for reviews from pet owners and the pet plans they use around the internet, because they can be informative.

When reading reviews, one of the key things to look for are conditions that policyholders thought were covered but weren't. Take note of the conditions and ask the provider about them when you talk to them.

4. Everything You Need to Do to Keep Your Pets from Going Missing

Keep your dog or cat from going missing—and know what to do if they do.

No one wants to think about the possibility of having a beloved pet go missing, but it's a reality over which all pet owners in Canberra should take precautions. While you can't guarantee a skittish cat or adventurous dog will never get lost or run loose—and it's easier to assume "oh, that won't happen to my pet"—it's your responsibility to be proactive about prevention and prepared for what to do in the event your pet does go missing. Here are the biggest tips all pet owners need to know to keep their furry family members safe and sound.

1. Practice Prevention

Even indoor cats should wear a collar with a tag that displays a phone number and other relevant contact info. Get your pet microchipped by a vet too—that way, if his collar comes off, anyone can have his chip scanned at a vet's office or shelter. (Remember to keep your contact details up-to-date in the microchip registry.) If you allow your dog in the yard, make sure your fence is secure. And if your pet is prone to bolting when guests come over, keep him in his crate or in a room with the door closed.

2. Act Immediately

If your pup is loose, canvass the area with treats in hand, calling his name. Show his picture to neighbors and post on your social media accounts or local Listserv. Your dog may take off when chased, so if you spot him, run away while shouting his name excitedly to get him to follow you. Entice a skittish dog to approach by sitting down, looking away, and making lip-smacking noises. Most outdoor cats are found within a one-block radius, and indoor cats tend not to stray past a few houses, so ask neighbors if you can search their sheds or porches.

3. Expand Your Search

Broaden your reach by posting publicly on Nextdoor or Facebook (some towns have a special page for lost pets). Make big, legible signs on neon paper to hang around your area. Include a photo, any distinctive features or behaviors ("scared easily," "loves cheese"), and your contact info. Consider offering a reward. Alert your microchip service and file lost-pet reports at your local animal-services agency and nearby shelters. If possible, visit the closest shelter daily.

5. How To Care for Your Pet Without Going Broke



As I look over my appointment schedule for the day, I mentally note that I'm set up for two patients to be dropped off for CT scans, one of whom will hopefully be immediately transported to an operating room, so surgery can be done to remove a large tumor pressing against the ribs.

There are five patients scheduled to receive chemotherapy, so I'll need to stop to meet with the oncology technicians and update them on the plan for the day. There's one coming in for acupuncture with our rehabilitation service, and I quickly note the time of the appointment so I can be sure to stop in and say hello. There are two patients coming in the afternoon for a recheck of lab work, and one for a superficial skin biopsy.

You might assume I am a high-profile doctor for humans who spends my day treating the most unusual diseases in people with ease, expertise and confidence. In truth, I'm a veterinarian, who spends my day treating animals with cancer. It's an exciting field to be a part of, but I do spend an excessive amount of time explaining to people that yes, it's possible to treat cancer in animals, and yes, people will pay to do so.

The High Cost of Providing Quality Vet Care

Though the work I do could be considered inspiring and remarkable, it comes with a hefty price tag.

The cost of maintaining the advanced equipment I require daily to diagnose cancer in my patients, the laboratory contracts I rely on to offer my reliable results and the state-of-the-art treatments I need to have on hand to offer my patients can be extraordinary.

As such, I'm required to be cognizant of the need to offer owners options within their financial means, while simultaneously keeping their pet's best interests in mind.

Superficially, pet ownership is rather simple. Humans provide for their pets' basic needs (food, water, shelter, activity and health care) and pets offer up unconditional love, companionship and, for many, a sense of family. Advances in veterinary medicine afford pet owners the opportunity to treat diseases previously considered incurable.

But there are many real issues to consider when we take a look at the cost associated with these options.

6 Financial Tips for Pet Owners

What can owners in Canberra do to ensure they are providing their pets with quality veterinary care without burdening themselves financially to the point of creating debt or guilt? I have six pieces of advice.

1. Practice prevention. Veterinary medicine centers much on preventive options such as vaccination; heartworm, flea, and tick prophylaxis and deworming. These events generally occur during annual exams, which are recommended for all pets regardless of age, breed or gender.

Owners sometimes find it difficult to recognize the importance of these measures when it comes to the benefit for their pet's health.

2. Consider habitat. Certain infectious diseases are more prevalent in certain geographical areas (Lyme disease and the Northeast, for example), or within certain demographic populations (e.g., outdoor cats are more at risk for contracting feline leukemia). Therefore, having a candid discussion with your veterinarian about your pet's specific risks could help tailor these annual exams to the needs of that particular patient.

3. Look into pet insurance. Pet insurance is one option that can help lessen the financial burden of health care. Plans can be purchased and tailored to the specific needs of a particular pet (or owner), and this can significantly reduce the financial burden placed on owners, especially when considering emergency situations or chronic diseases.

Plans may not cover pre-existing conditions, so many owners find they get the most benefit buying plans when their pets are young and healthy.

4. Get prescription drugs elsewhere. Prescription medications can often be purchased outside of the veterinary office either from "human" retail pharmacies or online ones. Just as with people, generic versions of medications for pets are cheaper than brand name.

Ask your vet if he or she knows of a less expensive source for prescribed drugs. You may need to call several pharmacies and explore options, but it could be well worth your time.

5. Find financial help. Several organizations offer financial assistance for owners demonstrating need. Owners may be eligible for grants or loans to help pay for care related to specific illnesses or even routine care.

Some veterinarians also offer discounts for senior citizens, owners who have multiple pets or those who have served in the military or emergency services (police, firefighters, EMTs, etc.).

It's possible, too, that your veterinarian might offer a payment plan. It never hurts to ask!

6. Choose your pet's medical care carefully. There are certainly veterinarians who offer low-cost services, but I would urge owners to be cautious when selecting aspects of their pet's health care

based on cost alone. As with many things in life, the mantra of “you get what you pay for” is often true.

For example, the price of a surgery may be significantly cheaper at one hospital versus another, but is that because no pain medications are dispensed? Or because there is no monitoring of the patient while under anesthesia or when an IV catheter is in place during surgery? In those cases, skimping corners may alleviate cost, but puts the animal at more risk from complications or even death.

The best advice I can offer is to be honest with your veterinarian about your concerns and make a plan together that prioritizes recommendations for your pet’s health alongside your personal and financial considerations.

6. Trusted Tips to Help Your Pet Live Longer



With the right care, you can enhance the quality—and quantity—of life for your furry friends.

Huck is a lucky dog—and an old one. Most Labrador retrievers make it to around age 12, but at 15, Huck has lived 25 percent longer than that. If he were the average people in Canberra (with a life expectancy of 78.6 years), he would be 98.

What’s his secret? “It’s a combination of things, including nutritious food with vitamins and oils, a lot of love and attention, and exercise,” says Huck’s owner, Henry Uman. He’s also never left alone but is always with at least one of his three dog siblings or a member of his human family.

In 2016, nearly 57 percent of people in Canberra households owned a pet, according to the Canberra Veterinary Medical Association, but it’s safe to say that 100 percent of them wish their dog or cat had Huck’s luck—and level of care.

In fact, advances in veterinary medicine have made it easier than ever to boost your pet’s life span and quality of life. Some now-standard procedures— for instance, vaccinations against rabies, hepatitis, and more—have had a great impact. On the other end of the spectrum are breakthroughs

that help animals survive injuries and illnesses that might have shortened their lives only a few years ago.

Take Fridgey, a Bengal cat. Just after his first birthday, Fridgey underwent surgery for a fractured hip, followed by physical therapy on a water treadmill. He recovered, but seven months later, he fractured his other hip. In March 2018, he had a hip replacement, the first time that vets at Purdue University performed the procedure. Today, Fridgey is as healthy as, well, a horse.

The bill for Fridgey's medical care was steep—almost \$10,000. But owners Tyler and Faith Goldsberry thought it was worth it. "Pets deserve the best treatment we can give them, and we would never add to our family without having the means to make sure they're taken care of," Tyler says. It helped that the family had pet insurance. Once a rarity, pet insurance is now in enough demand that some employers offer it as a benefit.

Should you invest in pet insurance? What about gluten-free food? There are so many health and care options available these days that finding the ones that are worthwhile for your pet can be daunting. This guide is a good place to start. Before you learn about how to help your pet live longer, these are the secrets your pet wishes it could tell you.

Watch their weight

An estimated 60 percent of cats and 56 percent of dogs are overweight or obese, according to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention. That can lead to big trouble.

"Excess weight increases the risk of conditions like diabetes, some cancers, and certain breathing problems, while the extra strain on joints can hasten the onset and worsen the severity of arthritis," says Jo Gale, global scientific advocacy and stakeholder relations manager for Mars Petcare. One study found that being overweight shortened dogs' life spans by up to 2.5 years compared with ideal-weight canine peers.

How can you tell whether your pet needs to drop some pounds? When you look at your dog or cat from above, you should see a distinct tuck at the waistline, and you should be able to feel (but not see) the ribs. If not, a few small changes could help: Walk your dog a few extra blocks a day, limit treats, and weigh your dog or cat regularly.

Visit the vet

As with humans, early exams can spot problems soon enough for successful treatment. "Because pets age more quickly than humans, issues can creep up fast," says Pete Lands, DVM, director of emergency and critical care at Saint Francis Veterinary Center in Swedesboro, New Jersey. Keep up on routine treatments such as vaccinations and deworming. Or consider a cat or dog wellness plan, which includes exams, vaccinations, dental cleanings, and tests.

Don't fret about gluten

Pets have specific nutritional requirements to stay healthy—most cats need to eat meat every day to get their protein. But just like the human world, the pet world has its fair share of dietary crazes, most of which you should ignore. For instance, there are plenty of gluten-free dog foods for sale now, but gluten allergies seem to be "extremely rare" in pets, according to a report published by Tufts University. Visit petfoodinstitute.org for more dietary information.



Make an exercise plan

Pets need daily workouts to stay healthy, so a formal exercise regime is a good idea. Aim for between 30 minutes and two hours of daily activity, such as walking or running, recommends [petmd.com](https://www.petmd.com). Athletic breeds such as German shepherds and collies will require more exercise, while smaller dogs such as bulldogs can benefit from a short walk around the neighborhood. You can stimulate your cat by playing with a laser pointer (avoid aiming it at your cat's eyes), providing catnip-infused toys, or adding perches to your home. And believe it or not, GPS- or WiFi-enabled devices can track your pet's steps, calories burned, heart rate, and other indicators.

Brush their teeth

According to Banfield Pet Hospital, 68 percent of cats and 76 percent of dogs have dental disease, and it may be linked to the development of heart and kidney disease. To avoid that, brush your pet's teeth every day. It's not as daunting as you might think! Kneel behind your pet and gently lift his or her lips, then brush the teeth and gums with a pet-friendly toothbrush or finger brush and pet toothpaste. (Dogs especially dislike the taste of mint, and you don't want Fido swallowing fluoridated paste.) You should also get your pet's teeth professionally cleaned by your vet at least once a year.

Consider pet insurance

Think about what kind of care you want to provide your pet. Some policies cover only accidents; others cover everything, including wellness care. All have deductibles. "If you're a do-it-all pet parent, then insurance will take most of the financial concerns out of your mind," Dr. Lands says. Premiums obviously vary, averaging about \$10 a month for limited coverage and \$100 a month for comprehensive care, according to [petinsurancereview.com](https://www.petinsurancereview.com). If you leave your pet home while you're at work, try these ways to keep them busy all day.

Protect against parasites

“All pets are susceptible to infectious diseases and parasites,” Gale says. For example, according to Lilian Wong, DVM, a veterinarian with Banfield Pet Hospital, you’ll find heartworm wherever you find mosquitoes. Check your pet for ticks regularly and ask your vet about preventive tools such as medications and monthly injections.

Think about a DNA test

It may sound crazy, but pinpointing your dog’s true genetic history can help protect against breed-specific diseases. For example, Labrador retrievers and German shepherds are likely to develop hip dysplasia.

DNA tests aren’t 100 percent -accurate—neither are the commercial tests for humans—but they’ll help narrow down the possible breeds. For \$189, the Embark Dog DNA Test screens for breed traits, ancestry, and risk of more than 160 genetic canine health conditions.

Help them age gracefully

Cats reach senior status when they’re 11 to 14 years old; for dogs, it’s around 7 or 8. If your cat has arthritis, consider a litter box with lower walls. Has your pet’s vision deteriorated? Place extra lights on stairs and in dark hallways. Finally, put rugs on slick floors and baby gates at the top of stairs to prevent falls.

7. Smart House Cleaning Tips Every Cat And Dog Owner Should Know

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, over 38% of households in Australia own a dog, and 27% own a cat. These pets bring a smile to your face when you walk through the door and brighten up your mood when you are having a bad day.

But owning a dog or cat also comes with the responsibility of tidying up after them. According to a study, homes with pets had a huge amount of bacteria and germs.

Even though most of these bacteria are not harmful to humans, it is important to clean and dust your home and remove pet hair and dander. Doing so will help you breathe fresh air and have a tidy home, and even your pets will be cleaner and healthier.

Here are some smart cleaning tips given by expert cleaners who offer end of lease cleaning Canberra to help you out:

Cleaning Your Home

1. Gather Your Cleaning Caddy

Your first step should be to arrange a cleaning caddy full of supplies so that you have everything you need whenever there is a pet accident or food spill. Your cleaning caddy should consist of the following:

White vinegar

Warm water

Spray bottle

Shaving cream

Microfiber cloths

Dish soap

Toothbrush

Microfiber sponge

Baking soda

Latex gloves

Baby wipes

Vacuum



2. Place Indoor Doormats Around Your Home

You should place indoor rugs or doormats in all areas of your home where your dog or cat likes to lounge. Place doormats under your sofa, near your dining table and at all entrances and exits. You can spray white vinegar on these rugs and then clean them with a damp microfiber cloth. You can also use carpet tiles around your home so that if there is a pet spill or accident, you can replace the tile.

3. Scrub Mud Off Carpets

If your pet has muddy feet from running around outside and spreads it on your carpets, then you should let the wet mud dry. You should then use a toothbrush to brush off all the mud and vacuum the remains with a vacuum cleaner.

If there is a mud stain, you must spray white vinegar and leave it for 30 minutes. The acid in the vinegar will lift the stain and dirt, and you should be able to wipe away the stain with a clean microfiber cloth.

Important Tip

Before you use vinegar on your carpet, you should test it on a hidden portion to see that it does not damage the fabric or colouring.

1. Deodorise Floors And Surfaces With Baking Soda

Professional bond cleaners in Canberra recommend that you use baking soda if your cat or dog has peed on the carpet or rugs or if their particular scent has filled your home. Baking soda is a powerful deodoriser and can remove strong urine and pet smells in no time.

Sprinkle as much baking soda as you like over your carpets, surfaces and floors and leave it off for 15 mins. Lastly, vacuum all these areas and watch the smells disappear.

2. Use Shaving Cream For Stains

If your dog or cat has had an accident on your carpets and has left a stain, you should spray shaving cream on it. Leave it for 5 minutes, then wipe the area with a damp microfiber cloth dipped in warm water. Shaving cream is powerful enough to eliminate even the toughest stains like cat urine and dog vomit.

3. Rub Latex Gloves On Your Sofas And Upholstery

If your sofas and chairs are full of pet hair and dander, you do not have to spend hours trying to scrub them off. You should just put on a pair of latex or rubber gloves to remove pet hair from your carpet and furniture. The pet hair will stick to these gloves and come right off. You can then wash these gloves with water to remove pet hair and dander.

4. Wash And Disinfect Pet Toys And Tools

Did you know that your pets' hair and urine are full of parasites that can transfer to you and cause major infections and diseases? Among these is the deadly leptospirosis disease that is spread through pet urine and causes vomiting and fever. It can even cause kidney failure, liver failure, and heart disease in severe cases.

Therefore to prevent the spread of these harmful parasites, you must hire bond cleaning experts in Canberra to do a deep cleaning of your home. You should also regularly wash your pet's toys and clothing in a bowl of dish soap and warm water to prevent these infections from spreading. Wash and scrub each item separately to eliminate germs, leaving them dry.

Additional Tips

Clean your pet's muddy paws at the door to prevent the spread of dirt and germs in your home.

You should use baby wipes to clean all the small dead skin cells and hair between your floor tiles.

Make sure you regularly brush your pet's hair to prevent it from spreading, and have a clean home.

Place throws and blankets over your sofa and upholstery where you and your pet can relax. You can easily wash these in the laundry and keep your home clean.

Lastly, you should use more durable and pet-friendly materials like velvet and leather for your furnishings as they are easy to clean.

Thus, if you follow the above cleaning tips, you can keep your home clean even with a cat or dog. You must also regularly groom and bathe your pet to prevent infections and diseases and keep your floors and surfaces in top-notch condition.

For more deep cleaning of your home, you should hire bond cleaning professionals in Canberra who will eliminate even the toughest pet stains and spills.

8. Conclusion

You must follow this guide carefully, which will help you to become a responsible pet owner in Canberra. It will be good for you as well as your pet. This guide you need before adopting a pet will have you ready for your new life together, no matter what you decide.

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