



# PAWS A WHILE

HUMANE SOCIETY OF TUOLUMNE COUNTY

# JANUARY

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## Reflections and Ushering in 2021!

*“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.” – Albert Einstein*

Another year has come and gone as most of us cautiously celebrate 2021. We have learned so much over this past year, from the state of the globe, to who we are as people. Yet in the end, the events of this year helped shape us to who we are, and for that, we can never forget.

In science, we have massively increased our knowledge in vaccine development and pandemic control. As people, we learned to adapt to a world of virtual interactions. As a world we came together for one of the first times, to work for a common cause. While these are just a few examples, we also need to recognize the good that came out of a challenging year. We all realize that we will not get back those we lost. We will not get back what has been taken from us personally. Yet we will remember the attempts we made to make this year just a bit better. Whether it was learning a new hobby, trying to get back in shape, finding ways to do your part, reaching out to friends and loved ones, being thankful that our Best Furry Friends (BFFs) were steadfastly there by our sides to keep us company as we coped with the ongoing challenges.

So for 2021, let us be optimistic, let us hope for the slowing of this pandemic through the vaccines available, let us hope justice is served where needed, and most importantly let us hope we can maintain our relationships with those we love as we look forward to a brighter and more optimistic year!.

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# Wonderful Winter Cat Names

...and yes, Virginia, these names can be used for dogs, too!

With the skies darkening and the temperature dropping, you know that winter is upon us!



Cats have always been associated with the yin in yin yang and colder weather with their striking amber, blue, and/or green eyes, it is said that a cat can peer into your very soul.

So if you are bringing home a new family member during the season of mittens, we have a list of name suggestions befitting this time of year!

## Male Winter Cat Names

Let's commemorate the season when you brought your male kitten home by choosing a name from the list below.

1. Alba – A white kitten during the season is perfect. Give him Jessica Alba's last name, which also means bright white.
2. Alaska – A unisex name, what better name to give than the state that boasts snow all year round?
3. Aspen – Famous skiing municipality in Colorado.
4. Cypress – The evergreen tree that graces the northern regions of the earth.
5. Ebenezer – It's Ebenezer Scrooge to you. The fictional character that is visited by the ghosts of Christmas.
6. Frost – There's a lot in the wintertime.
7. Frosty – The snowman.
8. Ice – Another form of water on our list.
9. Storm (stormy) – No, not Kylie Jenner's daughter.
10. December – The main month of winter.
11. Neve – Meaning "snow" in Latin.
12. North – No, not Kim and Kanye's daughter, but the region of the world where winter is dominant.
13. Santa – Who can forget the big jolly mascot of Christmas?
14. Saint Nick – Santa's real name.
15. Snowball – Basic, but still adorable.
16. Spruce – Another coniferous evergreen tree.
17. Stocking – Your cat might even find one to be a nice snuggle space.
18. Winter – Obvious and straight to the point.

After reading this list we just noticed that a lot of celebrities like to name their children after climate conditions. With that in mind, let's take a look at names on the other side of the coin.

## Female Winter Cat Names

Naming little girls always seems to be easier. We can draw inspiration from colors, weather, stars, and places.

1. Bianca – White
2. Blanche – White
3. Carol – It's a human name, but why not? It's also for all the caroling you will be doing during this time of year.
4. Coco (Cocoa) – Regarding the picture we painted above, sitting in front of the fireplace with hot cocoa is the picturesque image of winter..
5. Frostine – Female version of Frost or Frosty.
6. Holly – The plant that we see decorating wreaths.
7. January – Another cold winter month.
8. Vixen – For one of Santa's reindeer.



9. Sparkle – How the snow sparkles under the sun.
10. Aquarius – January zodiac sign.
11. Ginger – For gingerbread.
12. Scarlett – A shade of red associated with the holidays.
13. Evangeline – Like an angel.
14. Eve – For Christmas or New Year's Eve.
15. Juniper – Another tree that remains green during the cold season.
16. Solstice – For the Winter solstice.
17. Vail – Another municipality in Colorado famous for ski resorts.
18. Mittens – This name can be even more fitting for cats with different colored paws

With names that celebrate both Christmas and wintertime such as Eve, Scarlett, and Coco, you can really capture your love of the season and your new BFF!



## Celebrate National Train Your Dog Month with some Basic Obedience Training

From basic obedience commands to advanced tricks, dog training is a rewarding and engaging experience for you and your dog.

Just as every new human member of a household must be trained to behave properly, this also applies to dogs as well.

By nature, dogs want your approval and to please you (most of the time, anyway). Yet they can't do it without being taught what you expect of them.

During your dog's life you may decide to teach it to perform all manner of impressive tricks and task, yet the following types of training should be considered as absolutely essential for every dog owner. .

### Toilet Training

Toilet training is often a time of trial and stress for everyone involved. Yet if you are patient and use the proper training techniques, there's sure to be a happy outcome.

Start when the dog is young – about three – four months of age. Any earlier, and your puppy probably won't yet have sufficient bowel and bladder control. And if you start later,

the training period is likely to take much longer.

When you begin the training, start by confining the puppy to a fairly restricted area – a single room or even a crate. As your puppy begins to learn that ‘business’ is to be conducted outside, you can gradually expand the area that it’s allowed to roam.

Here are a few tips for effective toilet training:

- **Regular mealtimes.** Keep your puppy on a regular feeding schedule during toilet training. That means no snacking between meals! If it’s not mealtime, food shouldn’t be available to the dog.
- **Offer frequent potty opportunities.** Give your pup plenty of opportunities to take care of business outside. Go outside first thing in the morning, and then at regular intervals throughout the day. And also take your puppy outside after it wakes from a nap or finishes a meal.
- **Familiarity breeds comfort.** Take your dog to the same spot outside every time. Your dog will recognize its scent and more readily do its business.
- **Stay out with your dog.** When you take your dog outside for a potty break, stay with it until it has taken care of business, or until it becomes obvious that it doesn’t need to just yet. Don’t just turn the dog out in the yard by itself.
- **Praise success!** When your doggie does its duty, praise it! Offer a treat or something the dog really enjoys, like a walk.

## Obedience Training

Teaching your dog basic obedience is also a necessity. While an obedient dog is a pleasure to be around, the opposite is also true – a disobedient dog can be a real pain!

You can take your dog’s training to a much higher level if you choose to, yet at the very minimum, your dog should learn to respond to the following basic commands:

- **Sit.** This basic command helps you to keep control of your dog no matter the situation, and is a good command to teach first.
- **Drop.** This teaches your dog to instantly drop whatever is in its mouth. (Could save your dog from harm if it ever picks up something dangerous or toxic.)
- **Stay.** Teaches your dog to remain still, calm, and in one place.
- **Heel.** Teaches your dog to stay close to you as you walk, with or without a lead.
- **Come.** Teaches your dog to come to you upon your command. You should begin to teach this command to your puppy as soon as it recognizes its name.

There are a number of dog-training methods available for teaching your dog these commands, and we recommend positive reinforcement as the *best* method.

Positive reinforcement rewards wanted behavior rather than punishing unwanted behavior. This method of training makes learning more enjoyable for your dog, and will help to strengthen the bond between you and your pet.

## Remember, Start with the Basics

Teaching your dog the basic commands of obedience will make your household a much more pleasant place.

Your dog will be happy because it wants to please you, and because it wants to reap the rewards of good behavior. *You* will be happier because your dog will be more manageable and will enrich your life.

And visitors will be happy not to have to endure a poorly behaved pooch rampaging through the house!

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January is National  
**Walk Your Dog Month**

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## January Pet Holidays

Here's a list of Pet Holidays celebrated this month!

### Month-Long Celebrations

- Walk Your Pet
- Train Your Dog
- Unchain a Dog

### Day Celebrations

- January 14 – National Dress Up Your Pet Day
- January 21 – Squirrel Appreciation Day
- January 22 – National Answer Your Cat's Question Day
- January 29 – Seeing-Eye Guide Dog Anniversary



## HSOTC Open By Appointment Only!

Although we still have an ongoing pandemic, we are continuing to provide for the viewing and adoption of our animals by appointment only as we remain committed to the health and well-being of our staff, our animals, and the community we serve.

If you are interested in scheduling an appointment, please call 209-984-5489 anytime Tuesday - Friday from 9:00AM - 1:30PM.

To help protect one another, HSOTC staff members are required to wear face coverings and practice social distancing. If you have a scheduled appointment we ask that you wear a face covering and if you do not have a face covering we will provide you with one for your usage upon arrival. Once again, we appreciate your understanding as we all continue to stay safe and healthy.

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## Five Quick and Easy Ways to Help Tire Out Your Dog

Does your dog have a lot of



energy? Do you struggle trying to give your dog enough exercise each day? If so you're not alone.

Hopefully the following five activities will give your dog a lot of physical exercise in a short amount of time and tire out your dog in the process.

### **1. Flirt Pole**

A flirt pole (also called a flirt stick) is a long pole with a

lure attached by rope to the end. As you move the pole around the lure moves, enticing your dog to chase. Flirt poles provide great physical exercise, and they're quite mentally stimulating as well.

Flirt poles utilize your dog's instinct to chase in a nondestructive manner. And for those of us who have a hard time keeping up with our dogs it's great because it's an activity where your dog does all the work. Your dog will be running around like crazy while you stand there moving the lure around for them.

A couple minutes of this are extremely tiring for your dog. When first starting out keep the sessions short to avoid injury since this is a high impact activity. You can make your own flirt pole with some PVC pipe, a bungee cord, and a dog toy. Or they're also available at many pet stores, and online.

### **2. Frisbee**

Frisbee is like fetch on steroids and the extra running distance is great physical exercise. It doesn't get much easier than standing there tossing a Frisbee while your dog does all the hard work.

If your dog doesn't know how to catch a Frisbee, start by using one that's a soft disc. Traditional Frisbee's are pretty hard, so if your dog accidentally gets hit in the face with one, it may discourage them from trying to catch it. Get your dog excited about the Frisbee by tossing it short distances or rolling it on the ground and encouraging them anytime they show interest in it.

### **3. Tug of War**

Tug is fun, great physical exercise, and it's a good way for dogs to practice good manners. When playing tug just remember to follow one rule: the game stops if your dog's teeth touch your skin. Puppies who haven't learned bite inhibition will struggle with this rule. If you want to save your hands from those sharp teeth remember to teach your puppy not to bite before attempting tug.

A game of tug can be physically demanding for your dog, and if your dog is big it's great exercise for you as well. Since most tug toys are made out of rope or other materials that can be easily destroyed by dogs don't forget to put it away after your game.

### **4. Chasing Bubbles**

One of the easiest ways to tire your dog is to teach them to chase bubbles. If your dog doesn't know how to chase bubbles start by blowing a couple at a time. Point to the bubbles and encourage your dog to chase them around. Catch some yourself to show your dog that there's nothing to worry about, and that the whole point of the game is to get them before they touch the ground.

You can use bubbles made for kids, yet there's plenty of bubbles made for dogs online (bacon scented is a popular choice). They're nontoxic yet they can upset your dog's stomach if they ingest them and because they can also irritate your dog's eyes remember to wipe off their face afterwards.

### **5. Playing With the Hose**

If your dog doesn't mind the water, using the hose can be a great way to give them



exercise. Some dogs love chasing water that's coming out of a hose and it's one of those activities where your dog (or water bill) is doing all the work.

### **And Last but not Least...Don't Forget About Mental Exercise**

A good balance of mental and physical activity can keep dogs busy and entertained. A lot of your dog's physical demands and need for mental stimulation will depend on their breed and age. You'll know you've found the right balance when your hyper dog starts to relax throughout the day.

If you're giving your dog plenty of physical exercise and they're still hyped up try adding in some mentally stimulating activities. Playing some fun games with your dog and using food puzzles are a couple of additional thoughts. Stuffing a Kong with frozen peanut butter might seem too simple, but it's an easy way to keep dogs entertained for 30+ minutes.

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## **Six Useful Solutions for Hiding our Cat Litter Box**



All cat owners face the same dilemma: our kitties need a place to go potty, but none of us really want to have to see and smell it.

No worries! Here are a few clever solutions for hiding your cat litter box.

For cat aficionados, the litter box is a problem area in many households - it's ugly, smelly, and overall unpleasant – yet we owe our ability to keep our cats safely indoors to its invention.

Still, no one wants to look at it all day long, even if it's a small litter box for a small space!

So here are some easy solutions to keep it close by for your cat yet out of sight for you. The first two options are pretty typical, yet if you just don't have the required space, keep reading for some hiding spots that don't require a huge bathroom or a separate laundry room!

### **1. The Bathroom**

One of the most common places for a litter box is in the bathroom, but in many places, there just isn't any room in a bathroom for anything else taking up floor space.

If, however, you can find a spot (maybe an over-the-toilet wall cabinet, a medicine cabinet, or a linen closet with baskets) to put your typically under-sink cleaners and toiletries, it opens up a lower cabinet to make a perfect litter spot.

There are a couple of ways to do this, and your options may be somewhat dependent on whether you rent or own.

If you know you are looking for a permanent solution, you can cut a hole in the side of the cabinet or the door, and either leave the hole as-is or add a cat flap, so that your cat can come and "go" as they please.

If you are renting – or for a different look – you can take the doors and hinges off and hang a curtain around the cabinet.

### **2. The Laundry Room**

A laundry room is another popular spot for a litter box, and under the laundry sink is a good spot, as you can use a curtain in the same manner as under the bathroom sink.

The benefit to both laundry room and bathroom is that they are usually easy to clean and without carpet for any tracked litter to get into.

Great. Problem solved. Right?

It is unless, you don't have a laundry room, you have a pedestal sink in your bathroom or you have more than one cat.

Experts recommend one litter box per cat, plus one extra (although, if you are diligent about cleaning the box, you can get away with fewer) and finding space for three or more litter boxes in an apartment or small house can be tricky to say the least.

Not having litter boxes isn't really an option, but then what can you do?

There are a number of creative options when it comes to disguising your litter boxes, below are just a few.

### 3. "Treasure" Chest

While we don't consider the contents of litter boxes to be exactly treasure, a dog would probably beg to differ.

Regardless, a treasure chest can be a neat way to hide a litter box in plain sight – even as a focal point.

An old steamer trunk or cedar chest is a conversation piece with a secret, although you may not want to use Grandma's heirloom hope chest – we recommend a thrift trip for this one.

You will need to cut a hole in this big enough for your cat to climb through, and the hole can be anywhere the cat can access easily (the back of the chest is fine as long as it is far enough from the wall for your cat to get in).

### 4. Shelve It

If you have a good, deep, bookshelf or entertainment center, you can sacrifice a lower shelf for the litter box.

This can either be closed in with wood with an access hole cut somewhere into it (be sure you can access the box to clean it as well – you can put the panel on hinges to make this easier) or again with a piece of fabric that your cat can push past.

### 5. Wizarding World

One of the coolest things we've seen done with a litter box is to create a space under the stairs for it.

There is typically a large door covering the space for access, with the camouflage being limited only by your imagination. We've seen people paint little hobbit holes, dollhouses, and fairy homes on the wall, with the entrance to the box marked by a small arch or cat door that blends into the mural.



### 6. File It Away

If you have an old filing cabinet lying around, you can take out the second drawer from the bottom, and put the litter box in the bottom drawer.

A secure screen or plastic grid over the front half of the drawer acts as a means to eliminate some of the excess litter from your cat's paws, and keep your office floor clean.

Although the litter box may never be your favorite part of the home, it certainly doesn't



have to be a source of shame. Keep it clean and tucked out of the way, and your cats and guests will thank you.



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