



eNews #117 May 7, 2021



## Ahhhh...the Refreshing Month of May!

May is synonymous with the gifts of spring: flowers and good weather. After the storm, comes the sunshine and a celebration of spring and its new beginnings!

There are some interesting things to know about the month of May. After a long winter, most people are glad to see those flowers that have come up out of the ground because of the April showers. Along those lines here are five things that are interesting about the month of May.

**1. The Name** - May is named after the Greek goddess Maia who looked after plants. In addition, the month is known for love and success.

**2. May Flower** - The flower that represents May is the Lily of the Valley. It is known for

its beauty with blossoms that resemble a bell and a sweet captivating fragrance.

**3. We Celebrate Mom** - Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in May every year, when mothers, expecting mothers, and mother figures are recognized.

**4. Presidents Born in May** - Only two United States Presidents were born in this particular month. Harry S. Truman was born on May 8, 1884, and John F. Kennedy was born on May 29, 1917.

**5. April Showers bring May Flowers** - The saying is that April showers bring May flowers when, if the weather permits, there will be plenty of beautiful flowers in people's yards and on the hillsides.



## Human Food for Dogs That Will Do No Harm

Have you been wondering “Is human food bad for dogs?” Although we humans try to keep our dogs on their canine diets, we sometimes just can't resist slipping them an occasional human morsel. If you've been wondering what human food is safe for dogs, you certainly do not want to miss this article.

Let's explore the best human foods for dogs that are safe and healthy for our canine friends.

**1. Peanut Butter** - The first on the list is peanut butter. As a favorite treat for many canines, peanut butter is an excellent source of protein, heart-healthy fats, vitamin B, niacin, and vitamin E. For a stimulating activity that will keep your dog busy for hours, consider stuffing peanut butter into a Kong dog toy.

**NOTE:** Be sure to choose raw, unsalted peanut butter and be absolutely sure that you're not using sugar-free or “lite” peanut butter with artificial sweeteners, particularly xylitol, as these substances are incredibly toxic to dogs.

**2. Cooked Chicken** - As one of the most common ingredients in pet food, cooked chicken is another human food good for dogs. Cooked chicken may be slipped into the bowl along with your dog's regular food to add extra protein. In addition to being a savory treat, cooked chicken also makes a healthy meal replacement if you're in a pinch and out of dog food.

**3. Cheese** - Cheese makes a fantastic treat for your dog as long as they are not lactose intolerant, which a small percentage of dogs are. Make sure to monitor your dog's reaction after feeding them small amounts of cheese. Opt for low- or reduced-fat varieties and don't overfeed, as many cheese types can be high in fat and cottage cheese is typically a good choice for dogs.

**4. Pumpkin** - The next most-healthy human food for dogs is pumpkin. A member of the squash family, pumpkin is an excellent source of fiber, beta carotene, and vitamin A. Moreover, pumpkin can help keep the GI tract moving as well as aid with digestive issues. Both fresh pumpkin and canned pumpkin make excellent dog treats as long as it's plain with no added sweeteners.

**5. Eggs** - Scrambling up an egg for your pup is a great way to give their diet a protein boost. In addition to being high in protein, eggs are also a fantastic source of easily

digestible riboflavin and selenium.

**6. Green Beans** - Green beans are a source of protein, calcium, vitamin K, and iron. Raw green beans and cooked green beans make a great treat for your dog since they are filling and low in calories. Keep in mind to serve only beans that have no added salt or seasoning.

**7. Apple Slices** - Sliced apples are high in fiber, vitamin A, and vitamin C, making them a fantastic treat for your pup. Additionally, apple slices are known to help clean residue off a dog's teeth, which, in turn, helps freshen their breath. Before feeding your dog apple slices, make sure to take out the seeds and the core, as these can be choking hazards.

**8. Oatmeal** – The last best human food for dogs is oatmeal. Because cooked oatmeal is a great source of soluble fiber, it is especially beneficial to senior dogs with bowel irregularity issues. It is also a fabulous alternate grain for dogs allergic to wheat. Make sure to cook oatmeal before serving it to your dog and select only oatmeal that has no added sugar or flavor additives.

While this is just a short list of eight human food for dogs that are healthy and safe, please remember to feed these foods in small amounts when you first introduce them to your dog's diet.

And finally, remember before giving your dog any human food, do some research to make sure it's safe. Never feed your dog toxic human items such as chocolate, onions, grapes, raisins, yeast dough, artificial sweeteners, macadamia nuts, avocados, alcohol or coffee. And always consult your veterinarian with any questions you might have on what human food is safe and what is harmful.

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## **Yours, Mine, and Ours...The Ultimate Blended Family – Canine & Feline Cohabitation**

As someone who loves cats there is a good chance that you are someone who loves all pets. Your family already includes a cuddly (or cantankerous) feline, and now you plan to open up your heart and home to an adoptable pooch. You've crossed your fingers and wished to the stars that your cat and dog will get along.

The relationship between your cat and dog doesn't have to be based on luck, in fact advanced planning can help ensure a smooth transition for all family

members, two- and four-legged.

So, how do you successfully introduce your new dog to your resident cat?

Here are a few steps to follow when bringing a new pup home:

1. First, understand the goal is for canine and feline to exist safely and peacefully. They do not need to be best friends – that is a bonus.
2. Before your pooch comes home set aside a room/section in the house that is designated cat-only. This is a place the cat can easily go for safety and quiet time. Also, it is helpful to have a few high areas around the house for the cat to escape (cat trees are helpful if your furniture is off limits). And most importantly, be sure kitty can get to the litter box, food, and water dishes without any canine interference.
3. When you get home with your pup, walk them through the house on a leash and watch to see how they respond to the cat smells.
4. Next, still on a leash, take them into the room where the cat is hanging out (but not the cat-only room). You may need a partner to carry the cat to you and the dog. Do not put the cat next to the dog or allow them to get in striking distance of each other. Initially, you just want to see how they respond to one another visually. Does the dog lunge, growl or just wag his tail when he sees the cat? Does the cat hold its ground or take off running? Try to gauge both pets first reaction – fear, excitement, aggression or disinterest.
5. During this initial introduction, start the training process. Once you gauge the first response from your pets, immediately ask the dog for its attention and give them a treat once you have its attention. If the dog knows “sit”, ask for this behavior and give them another treat. The goal is for your pup to learn that seeing the cat equates to calm behavior.
6. If the dog pulls on the leash and tries to chase the cat, calmly but firmly tell them “No.” Ask for their attention (again, using a treat to get their focus on you). Only give treats when they give you eye contact (you can slowly raise the treat up to your eye to get them to look at you). Repeat, and repeat, and repeat this training. Once your pup knows the “sit” command without the cat around, add this command to the training routine.
7. For the first few days keep the leash on the dog so you can quickly catch them if they start to chase. If their chasing is relentless, you will need to keep cat and dog separated except for designated training times. During these times you need to keep your pup on the leash and work on the attention and sit commands while the cat has freedom to roam. Do not use the dog crate for this training. A dog crate should only be used for calm, quiet time and never for training or punishment.
8. Never leave the cat and dog alone with access to each other when you aren't present, this includes night time when you are sleeping and can't monitor their interaction.

Some other things to consider when selecting a dog that will be good with your cat:

- The smaller the dog the less worries you'll have about your cat getting hurt in a scuffle. However, try to avoid small dogs that have a snappy, mouthy response to fear.

- Large, gentle giant breeds are typically marshmallows around kitties.
- A dog that is known to be good with small dogs will not necessarily be good with cats. Dogs can tell the difference between species.
- Terriers and sight hounds (e.g., Greyhounds) tend to have a high prey drive and are sometimes the hardest to train to live with a cat. That said, some of the gentlest dogs around cats are “pittie” mixes and so, often, it simply comes down to the dog’s personality.

A couple more notes to consider when blending your family with canines and felines:

- Keep the litter box in an area a dog can’t get to. Most dogs LOVE to eat cat poop. Not only is that a disgusting habit but eating the litter along with it can be dangerous to their digestive system
- If you have an aggressive cat that holds their ground and swats the dog, don’t let the dog fight back. Let the cat be dominant between the two... better to have a dog afraid of a cat than a dog that will hurt the cat.

With consistent training, your pup will quickly learn that chasing the cat is not welcome behavior. A last word of caution – don’t get overly confident in the cat/dog relationship too quickly. Usually, you’ll make some positive progress for a few days and then may have a few setbacks yet over time it will all work out and become the perfect blended family!



## May Pet Celebrations

Here are some of the May pet events to celebrate!

### Month-Long Celebrations

- National Pet Month
- Responsible Animal Guardian Month
- Chip your Pet Month

### Week-Long Celebrations

- May 2 – 8 – Be Kind to Animals Week
- May 2 – 8 – Dog Anxiety Awareness Week

### Day Celebrations

- May 8 – National Dog Mom’s Day
- May 14 – International Chihuahua Appreciation Day
- May 20 – National Rescue Dog Day

## The Ultimate Cat Lover Gift Guide!

Looking for the purrfect gift for cat lovers? Look no further, we’ve got it all here for you!

**1. Cat Pillow Case Set** - Making the most comfortable sleeping place is the ultimate goal. These soft pillow cases feature a minimalist cat ear design that will fit in with any



style. It celebrates a love for cats in a simple and stylish way. For a unique gift that will for sure be used, these pillowcases are great for the cat lover homeowner.

**2. Cat Themed Welcome Mat** - Most cats aren't known for welcoming guests at the door. In case your friend's cat is known to hide as the doorbell rings, offer them a cute cat-themed mat that is a perfect way to welcome guests at the door.

**3. Cat Shower Curtain** - A cat-themed shower curtain will put a smile on anyone's face and adds a pop of color to the bathroom. If you're looking for a cat-themed bathroom makeover, start with the shower curtain for a bold statement.



**4. Cat Bag Sealer** - A perfect housewarming gift that's not too overwhelming. They'll keep snacks and dry foodstuffs fresh and crunchy (or perfect for holding cat treats). They can even be used to seal up the cat food bag, which kitty will appreciate!



**5. Cat Measuring Cups** - What could be more perfect for a baking enthusiast than cat-themed measuring cups? This unique gift is as stylish as it is practical. And are so nice, they're best left on display where friends can "aww" at them.

Let's be honest, cats have always been fierce. They totally rock the squint-face. Raise a paw, or a glass, to their fierceness with one of these unique gifts for that cat aficionado at heart!

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# Dear Tabby



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**Why do cats purr?** Purring occurs as a result of vibration of vocal cords due to neurological stimulation from brain activity. Cats generally purr when in contact with someone; a favored owner stroking or greeting a familiar partner cat. Positive experiences also elicit purring, rolling or rubbing, being in a warm familiar environment or when they are about to fall peacefully asleep.

**What was the name of Sam Walton's beloved hunting dog, now found on WalMart's private label dog food?** Ol' Roy was the dog's name and this WalMart private label brand has surpassed Purina to become the top-selling dog food in the U.S.

**Purr Fact:** Despite its name, the Great Dane originated in Germany!

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## Five Great Reasons to get a Dog for your Family

Whether a family of one or having created a mini school's worth of children, an addition of a dog to your household could just make your family life even more complete. A "man's best friend" is called that for a reason. Dogs are loyal and make great companions for a person on their own or to accompany a larger group. There are concerns with having a dog and understanding that it is a commitment is important, but looking at the benefits, there are several reasons to have a household that includes a four-legged friend.

**Reason to get a Dog #1 – Learn Responsibility** - Whether it is self-discipline or trying to instill the same mentality with your kids, a dog requires responsibility. A dog will not walk itself or feed itself and if it does, you are far too good at training your dog. Having the discipline to get up at a certain time, feed them at a certain time, walk them at a certain time, take them for regular grooming, and tidy up after them is a life-long skill.

Most adults, let alone children haven't managed this, so adding the responsibility and dependency of another living thing can really help build up the resiliency and discipline within your house. The best bonus about this is that for any child, it is far more rewarding to have to look after a dog than it is to do chores around the house while still building up their understanding of needing to be responsible.

**Reason to get a Dog #2 – Walk More & Stay Healthy** - Especially when it's cold outside and the couch seems like a much better option than dragging yourself to the gym, a dog might just be the option to keep everyone a lot more active. Childhood obesity is on the rise and is a key factor in the increased development of diabetes and heart disease in later life. Having a dog means that you then have a living thing that has endless amounts of energy and more importantly, a great reason to spend more time outside and play.

**Reason to get a Dog #3 - Improve your Mental Health**- Mental health is an issue that nobody finds easy to tackle. However, this is much more important when looking at younger people. As we grow older, we find different ways to become resilient and express our own emotions. Mental health can affect everyone, yet it is especially challenging in younger people. An article by Kathleen Doheny looks into the research that shows the love from a pet can help reduce anxiety, stress, and assist coping mechanisms in dealing with depression. This is even more important for those that have difficulty processing their emotions (e.g. people on the ASD spectrum).

**Reason to get a Dog #4 - Reduce your Chances of Getting Ill**- Put down the anti-bacterial hand sanitizer for just one second and for a moment process this research. Given the environment over this last year, many of us have learned more than we ever expected and/or experienced a refresher course in human biology. So after reading headlines and published papers, I find that the headline above might actually be true.

Research studies have shown that Infants that grow up with either dogs or cats are *less* likely to suffer with respiratory related immune disorders and allergies throughout their lifetime. This means that as long as an infant has a healthy immune system, being around a dog means their body becomes more resistant to foreign bodies and less likely to suffer health problems in their first year. They also have less need for antibiotics because they can fight off bugs better! Go figure!!

**Reason to get a Dog #5 - Be Sociable and Have Fun**- Having a dog is not just having an extension of the family. It is not just a bond of loyalty and companionship...it is a great way of building social skills. Having a dog means that you have a regular chance to play, get outside, and also meet other dog lovers. For children, it develops their ability to play but also your dog can be a great way of learning how to share and also how to interact with others.

So...

There are lots more reasons to get a dog and it is also important to prepare in the right way. Make sure you are ready for the commitment and have a clear understanding of how to get your house ready for a new member. This is doubly important when you have young children or babies that will literally pick up anything and put it in their mouth.

When you have taken those steps, embrace and welcome the new "furbal" life into your family!



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to save one more animal  
at a time.*

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