

Comparison between cats and dogs as pets

Although cats and dogs seem to be very much alike when it comes to pet care, there are also many differences in how each of the species should be handled. As the development of cats throughout the history is quite different to the one of the dogs, the species also differ in behaviour and how they perceive certain things.

Dogs are generally much more loyal than cats, which is understandable if one considers that dogs have always been treated as man's accessories who helped him hunt, pull sleigh, guard his property and protect him when he needed protection. Cats, on the other hand, were usually not given any tasks to perform at all. They had to catch mice, of course, but they were provided with this urge by the Mother Nature herself. One could say that a cat never really got domesticated, at least not to the point of domestication of a dog.

Even nowadays the aspect of training a dog differs a lot to the one of training a cat. Although the tasks described above are largely not needed anymore, a pet dog will undergo a much more sophisticated and tiresome training course than a cat. Even the most inexperienced dog owner will teach a dog a trick or two, at least to bring a stick back if nothing more, though most of the pet dogs are trained not just to be pets, but also to be useful at least to a certain point. Dogs can for example guard one's property or even help visually impaired people to perform everyday tasks. Cats on the other hand are generally not trained at all.

One point that I can discuss in this comparison is also the level of dependency on man. Dogs depend almost entirely on their owners. They have become domesticated to the point that they cannot interact well anymore without a human touch. Most of the dogs need to be walked at least twice a day, whereas cats usually do that on their own. Throughout the process of domestication dogs have lost their independency and to a certain point even their free will. A cat would never ask for a permission to get out of the house, it would demand to be left out. Most of the dogs however have the need to be walked by their masters, because they feel lost if they are left on their own. Stray dogs are clearly an exception in this respect of course, but most of the stray animals could hardly be considered as pets. Because dogs are so bound to their master and for the reasons mentioned above, they cannot be left alone for the whole day for his master to pay a visit or something similar. Sooner or later they would start hauling and making noise to attract attention. Cats have no such problems; they can be left alone for several days at a time, if they have enough food.

Cats clearly have different demands to the ones posed by the dogs. Although they seem to be quite similar, they need to be handled in completely different ways, namely dogs need much more attention than cats. They take more of our time, however they also give much more back and thus show us they care for us.