

The 12 Most Cat-Friendly Dog Breeds

Have cats and considering adding a dog? While most dogs would love to share your home with one or more kitties, knowing which dogs are most suitable is key. Here are a dozen of the most cat-friendly breeds.

Reviewed by [Dr. Becker](#)

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- The 17% of American households who own both dogs and cats can attest that it's very possible for cats and dogs to not only cohabitate but also thrive together
- Golden retrievers are easygoing and highly likely to adapt to a new living companion like a cat
- Papillons are often outgoing, inquisitive and active — a perfect pal for a lively feline
- Beagles are friendly to a fault, which means while they don't make the best guard dogs, they're often wonderful dogs for families with multiple pets or small children
- Bassets are usually laid-back and low-key, which means they're unlikely to be bothered by a kitty batting at their tail

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Cats and dogs are often viewed as natural enemies, but the truth is that animals of different species often coexist peacefully. Meanwhile, even those of the same species may have spats. The secret to living in peace lies not so much with choosing the correct species as it does with blending the right personalities — and introducing them properly.

In other words, in a household with two cats and one dog, you may have a cat and a dog who are best friends, and two cats who can't be in the same room — or any mix of relationships. The 17% of American households who own both dogs and cats can attest that it's very possible for cats and dogs to not only cohabitate but also thrive together.

That being said, not all cats and dogs get along, and some breeds may be a better fit than others, generally speaking, if you're looking to add a dog to your cat-friendly household (or vice versa).

Sighthounds, or breeds that were bred to hunt small animals using sight and speed, such as greyhounds, basenji and Irish wolfhounds, would be an example of dogs that may not be a good fit. Terriers, which also have a strong drive to hunt, and herding dogs, may also rub cats the wrong way. So which breeds are reported as best?

12 Cat-Friendly Dog Breeds

1. **Golden Retriever** — They're friendly, outgoing and eager-to-please, making them excellent family dogs. Golden retrievers are easygoing and highly likely to adapt to a new living companion like a cat. And while they're playful and energetic, they're gentle and unlikely to be overly rough with a cat.

2. **Papillon — Papillons** are tiny toy spaniels that weight an average of 7 to 10 pounds. They rarely pose any threat to your cat (whereas a large cat could easily threaten this type of dog), are incredibly intelligent and highly trainable. This means they'll catch on quickly when taught that the cat is their friend, not their foe. Papillons are also outgoing, inquisitive and active — a perfect pal for a lively feline.
3. **Pug** — Pugs are friendly, affectionate and love attention. Many will happily cuddle up to a cat companion but won't be overrun by even the bossiest of kitties. Known for packing big personalities into their small bodies, a pug can be a great match for the antics of curious cat.
4. **Beagle** — Beagles love to use their keen sense of smell to hunt, but they're intelligent and can recognize that your pet cat is not their prey. Plus, many beagles are friendly to a fault, which means while they don't make the best guard dogs, they're wonderful dogs for families with multiple pets or small children.
5. **Basset Hound** — Bassets are usually laid-back and low-key, which means they're unlikely to be bothered by a kitty batting at their tail. These tolerant dogs are known for being agreeable, and even though they can also be stubborn, they'll adjust to a cat-centric household without protest.
6. **Labrador Retriever** — Labrador retrievers are just as much lovers as they are lovable! With friendly, outgoing and playful personalities, most Labradors can easily keep up with an athletic cat but are gentle enough to interact with a kitten.
7. **Japanese Chin** — The tiny Japanese chin weighs an average of 4 to 9 pounds but has the agility of a cat. The American Kennel Club (AKC) describes them as "a distinctly feline breed" that's fastidious, graceful and generally quiet"— the perfect cat companion (and cat-like companion!).¹
8. **Newfoundland** — Don't let their large size fool you — newfies are calm, friendly and tolerant (that's why "Nana" in Peter Pan is a newfoundland), and will welcome a cat into the household with open paws. They're known for being sweet-tempered, gentle and highly trainable, all of which are a very good thing given their size, but also make them perfect for cat-loving households.
9. **Pomeranian** — Pomeranians are affectionate, energetic and about the size of a domestic cat. They enjoy tricks and games and have alert, inquisitive personalities that can keep up with that of even the cleverest of kitties.
10. **Bichon Frise** — Known for being charming, sweet and affectionate, most of these happy-go-lucky dogs have never met a cat they didn't like! Bichon will welcome virtually anyone into the household, including those from different species.
11. **English Bulldog** — Despite their rough-and-tumble outward appearance, bulldogs are generally docile and easygoing, affectionate and loyal. Most would happily share their home with a cat or two and typically get along great with other dogs, too. Be aware, however, that **bulldogs** are often plagued with health problems.
12. **Havanese** — Havanese attract attention for their long silky coats but are adored for their intelligence and outgoing, funny personalities. These playful pooches tend to adore having housemates to frolic with, and this includes children, cats and dogs alike.

Introducing a Dog to Your Cat

Introductions are everything when it comes to bringing a new pet into your home — especially one of a different species. Avoid the urge to let your new pet have the run of the house right off the bat. Instead, give your dog access to a room or few small rooms only, and be sure your cat can avoid them if he so chooses.

Allow your dog time to acclimate to her new environment before extending the dog gate to an additional room. This room-by-room introduction (often taking up to a week) is also a great way to learn housebreaking habits and also watch your dog's reaction to seeing the cat from time to time, as your cat makes occasional appearances.

For the first official introduction, keep your dog on a leash and lead him toward your cat, but don't force the meeting. Allow your cat to either come toward your dog or go away, and if your dog seems to be getting overly excited, distract him with a treat or a quick walk outside. Introductions may go more smoothly after you've given your dog rigorous exercise and fatigue has set in.

Little by little your pets will likely learn that they can be friends, but don't leave them unattended together until you're sure their relationship is a good one. Even then, your cat should have the ability to escape from the dog at all times if desired, either by jumping up onto a counter or over a baby gate or other barrier that the dog cannot cross.

Many 'Mutts' Love Cats, Too

Keep in mind that you don't need a **purebred dog** or a puppy in order to become a multi-species pet household. Even the AKC notes, "Most dog breeds can live calmly with a cat if they are socialized as puppies and are trained to leave the cat alone."²

Your local animal shelter is probably filled with dogs who would love to share your home with a couple of cats, and many shelters have cat-testing programs to determine which dogs will do best with felines. The volunteers are usually well-informed as to which dogs would get along with cats — and which would not — so please consider adopting one of these animals in need to complete your pet family.

Sources and References

¹ [American Kennel Club, Japanese Chin](#)

² [American Kennel Club, Dogs That Are Good with Cats](#)
