

Owning a Pet

Being a responsible pet owner means more than just feeding your pet and taking them to the vet occasionally.

Caring for your pet takes commitment, time and effort.

Before purchasing a pet

Pet ownership is a commitment that should be considered carefully. Before you purchase a dog, cat or any other pet you should consider the responsibility of owning a pet and ensure that you can meet the animal's needs. Some of these responsibilities can be quite costly so you need to ensure that you can afford to care for the animal for the duration of its life.

Breed

Before you purchase a pet it is important to consider what type of pet will suit your lifestyle. You should research different breeds and choose a breed that is appropriate for you. Visit the Petcare Information and Advisory Service at www.petnet.com.au where you can use the SELECTAPET program to decide on the type of dog or cat suited to your lifestyle.

Microchip and Register

Microchipping and registering your pet is a two step process.

1. You must have your dog/cat microchipped by 12 weeks of age. This can be done at your local vet.
2. Once your dog/cat has been microchipped it needs to be registered on the NSW Companion Animals Register through your local council by the time the pet is 6 months of age.

If you are selling a cat or dog it must be microchipped and registered. It is the previous owner's/ breeder's responsibility to send Council a completed and signed change of owner form.

Desex your pet

It is a good idea to desex your pet if you are not planning to breed. Desexing your pet can prevent the likelihood of aggression and reduce the desire to wander. Also it is cheaper to register your pet if they are desexed.

Council Pet Related Events

Council runs various education events for pet owners throughout the year.

Dog Day by the Bay

An annual event held in the second part of the year. Dog Day includes fun activities, demonstrations, competitions and education for dog owners.

Dog Safe Program

Pittwater Council offers a dog safe program for children aged 4 - 8 years old. If you would like to have the program presented at your school or preschool contact Council on 9970 1194.

Companion Animal Education Nights

Council offers a number of education nights throughout the year for dog and cat owners. Contact Council on 9970 1194 or visit the website for further information.

PO Box 882, Mona Vale NSW 1660
Phone: 02 9970 1111
Email: pittwater_council@pittwater.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au

Responsible Pet Ownership



Dog Owners

Exercise

Dogs need regular exercise. The amount of exercise your dog will require depends on the breed. The internet is a good place to research the requirements of your dog's breed. Add variety to exercise by walking in different areas, taking your dog to an off leash area to play ball and socialise with other dogs. When playing ball games or with other throw toys, rotate toys to prevent boredom. Remember to put your dog on a lead when in a public place other than an offleash area. Your dog must always remain under the effective control of a competent person.

Training

Training stimulates a dog's body and mind, helps prevent boredom, calms over excitement and helps create well behaved dogs. Take time out each day for training, attend training classes or join a dog club.

Barking

Dogs bark naturally, however barking can become excessive. Dogs bark most frequently when their owner is not at home and in many cases the owner is unaware of the extent of the problem. Barking can be caused by boredom, anxiety, attention seeking, disturbances, discomfort, excitement and sometimes habit. If you dog has a barking problem you may need to contact a local vet, animal behaviourist or dog trainer to help solve the problem.

Roaming

Your dog must be securely contained on your property at all times and not be allowed to roam.



Cat Owners

The average life expectancy of cats ranges from two to five years if they are kept outdoors, to 17 or more years for a cat kept indoors.

Keeping your cat indoors

For the safety of your cat it is best to keep them indoors. Cats allowed outside to roam can be at risk of getting run over or attacked by other animals. They are also more exposed to disease, parasites, poisons and traps.

It is most important that your cat is kept indoors between dusk and dawn - the time when they will hunt and kill wildlife and fight with other cats. All cats should wear a collar with two bells attached to warn animals of the cat's presence.

Caring for your cat

Your cat needs adequate food and water and some cats require regular grooming. All cats require regular health checks with your local vet. For further information about caring for your cat contact your local vet.

Wildlife Protection Areas

There are 22 designated Wildlife Protection Areas within Pittwater. Domestic animals are prohibited from entering these areas. In some areas cats are required to be in a cat run or indoors at all times. Refer to www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au for further information about these areas



Additional Information

Lost your pet?

You can help prevent your pet getting lost by making sure they wear a collar and identification tag with your contact details. Your pet should also be microchipped and registered. If your pet is lost check with your neighbours, local veterinary clinics, animal shelters and the local Council. Animals can travel a fair distance so check with these organisations in neighbouring suburbs as well.

Going away?

Ensure your pet will be safe and well cared for while you are away. Book them into a boarding kennel.

Fireworks and thunderstorms

Pets can get scared during fireworks displays and thunderstorms. Make sure your pet is confined securely to prevent them from running away.

Travelling in the car

Ensure your pet is secured properly. Do not allow pets to sit on your lap or in the front seat of your vehicle. It is an offence to have a dog travel in the back of a utility if it is not secured. Never leave your pet in the car, especially on a hot day.

Rabbit owners

If you decide that you can no longer care for your rabbit make sure you re-home it or give it to a shelter. Do not let it go into the wild.

