

American Animal Hospital Association 2004 Pet Owner Survey



This questionnaire is sponsored by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), a professional veterinary association of more than 33,000 veterinary care providers who treat companion animals. AAHA and its members are recognized as a premier resource for quality pet care and pet health information.

Healthy Practices.
Healthier Pets.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

KEY:

Key: This study is based on the responses of 1,238 pet owners throughout the US and Canada. For each question, N = number of respondents.

1. How many of each pet do you own? (N=1,238)

	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more
Dog	18%	42%	25%	10%	3%	2%
Cat	46%	20%	16%	8%	4%	6%
Bird	91%	5%	2%	<1%	<1%	1%
Reptile	94%	4%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Pocket Pet (gerbil, hamster, guinea pig, etc.)	94%	3%	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Rabbit	96%	2%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Ferret	99%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Fish	95%	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%	2%
Other	96%	2%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

Please answer the remaining survey questions with only one of your pets in mind.

2. Please indicate below which one pet you will use to answer the remaining questions. (N=1,237)

Dog	74%
Cat	24%
Bird	<1%
Ferret	<1%
Rabbit	<1%
Reptile	<1%
Pocket Pet	<1%
Other	<1%

Human/Pet Relationship

3. How did you obtain your pet? (N =1,237)

Breeder	35%
Animal shelter/rescue organization	20%
Friend/family	16%
Stray	11%
Pet store	7%
Veterinarian	3%
Other	8%

4. If you were deserted on an island and could have only one companion, which would you pick? (N=1,219)

Human	47%
Dog	40%
Cat	10%
Other	2%
None	<1%

5. Do you feel more bonded to your pet since the events of September 11, 2001? (N=1,186)

Yes	29%
No	71%

6a. Does your pet ever travel with you? (N=1,232)

Yes	67%
No	33%

6b. If so, where do you stay when you travel overnight with your pet? (Multiple responses accepted) (N=818)

With friends/family	65%
Hotel/motel	43%
Campground	22%
Rental house/condo	13%
Other	7%

7. When you travel without your pet, how do you provide care for him or her? (Multiple responses accepted) (N=1,207)

Friend/family	61%
Pet sitter	24%
Boarding facility – veterinary hospital	20%
Boarding facility – kennel	12%
Other	2%
I never travel without my pet	7%

8a. Does your pet have human-like personality traits? (N=1,221)

Yes	94%
No	6%

8b. If so, which human-like personality trait best fits your pet most of the time? (N=1,146)*

Emotional/sensitive	30%
Outgoing	28%
Inquisitive	26%
Stubborn	20%
Laid back	17%
Competitive	8%
Reserved/shy	6%
Other	8%

9a. How likely are you to risk your own life for your pet? (N=1,220)

Very likely	56%
Somewhat likely	37%
Not at all likely	7%

9b. If you were in distress, would you expect your pet to come to your rescue? (N=1,213)

Yes.....64%
No36%

10. Do you ever break household rules (such as letting your pet on the bed, giving extra treats, etc.) with your pet when your spouse or significant other is not present? (N=1,192)

Yes.....69%
No31%

11. Have you ever used your pet to attract a new friend or potential mate? (N=1,233)

Yes7%
No93%

12. Who listens to you best? (N=1,209)

Pet.....45%
Spouse/significant other30%
Friend11%
Family member.....11%
Other3%

13a. Do you ever bring your pet to work with you? (N=1,219)

Yes37%
No63%

13b. If so, how often do you bring your pet to work with you? (N=443)

Every day17%
At least once per week10%
At least once per month21%
A few times per year38%
At least once per year.....14%

14. Has your pet ever attended a pet birthday party? (N=1,228)

Yes18%
No82%

15. Which one of the following upsets your pet the most? (N=1,219)*

Severe weather—thunder, wind, etc.20%
Noisy household items—vacuum, hair dryer, lawn mower, etc.....18%
Fireworks17%
Other people—mailman, neighbors, visitors, etc. ..8%
Riding in the car7%
Getting wet7%
Being in a pet carrier7%
Other pets5%
Other10%
Nothing upsets my pet10%

16. How often do you think of your pet while you are away from him or her during the day? (N=1,213)

All the time21%
Every hour7%
A few times per day54%
Once a day13%
Never3%
I am never away from my pet during the day2%

17. Which of the following methods did you use to train your pet? (Multiple responses accepted) (N=1,202)

Crate33%
Veterinarian's advice.....20%
Pet training book.....19%
Professional pet trainer18%
Self10%
Pet store training program3%
Veterinary behaviorist.....2%
My pet was trained when I got him/her1%
Other10%
Did not provide training for pet23%

18a. Does your pet enjoy watching television? (N=1,213)

Yes36%
No64%

18b. If so, what type of programming does he or she most enjoy watching? (Multiple responses accepted) (N=430)

Animal-related programming,
i.e. Animal Planet57%
Cartoons18%
Sports13%
Sitcoms12%
News5%
Talk shows4%
Other18%

19. Have you ever acquired a pet primarily to keep another one company? (N=1,208)

Yes48%
No52%

Pet Health

20. How much have you spent on veterinary care for your pet during the past 12 months? (N=1,203)

Less than \$503%
\$50–\$997%
\$100–\$24923%
\$250–\$49926%
\$500–\$99922%
\$1,000 or more19%

21. Do you spend more on your pet now than you did three years ago? (Please include all expenses including veterinary care, food, toys, etc.) (N=1,207)

Yes, I am spending more now than I did three years ago53%
No, I am spending less now than I did three years ago5%
No, I am spending the same amount now than I did three years ago22%
I did not have my pet three years ago14%
Don't know6%

22. Which of the following steps do you take to ensure your pet's quality of life? (Multiple responses accepted) (N=1,216)

Regular veterinary checkups	94%
Had pet spayed or neutered	77%
Premium brand of pet food	71%
Regular exercise	58%
Pet id tags or tattoos	46%
Teeth cleaning – at a veterinary hospital	37%
Implanted ID chip (microchip).....	25%
Teeth cleaning – at home	22%
Car seat, safety harness, or crate in vehicle	21%
Pet health insurance	3%

23. Have you ever taken your pet to any of the following board-certified veterinary specialists for advanced care? (Multiple responses accepted) (N=968)

Surgeon	23%
Internal medicine specialist	9%
Radiologist	4%
Dermatologist.....	4%
Oncologist (cancer specialist)	3%
Behaviorist	3%
Other	9%
Have not taken pet to a board-certified veterinary specialist	63%

24. Which health care provider do you visit more often, your own physician or your pet's veterinarian? (N=1,212)

My pet's veterinarian	58%
My own physician	27%
I visit both health care providers the same number of times	15%

25. How often do you provide exercise for your pet? (N=1,211)

Daily	80%
Weekly	11%
Monthly	1%
Less often	8%

26. Through which means do you seek pet health care advice? (Multiple responses accepted) (N=1,219)

Veterinarian	98%
Internet	25%
Pet health care books and magazines.....	22%
Friends and family	19%
Breeder	7%
Other.....	2%

27. How often do you use the Internet to find pet information? (N=1,215)

Never.....	39%
A few times a year	41%
Once a month or less	13%
Once a week or less	4%
More than once a week.....	3%

28. Do you have an emergency preparedness plan that includes your pet in case of natural disasters such as fire, flood or earthquake? (N=1,212)

Yes	55%
No	45%

29. Did you know that your veterinarian is a member of the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA)? (N=1,203)

Yes	76%
No.....	24%

General Information

30. Please indicate your gender. (N=1,210)

Female.....	80%
Male	20%

31. What is your age group? (N=1,215)

Less than 25 years	12%
25–34	21%
35–44	22%
45–54	23%
55–64	15%
65 or over	7%

32. Does your household include anyone under the age of 18? (N=1,214)

Yes	30%
No	70%

33. Please identify the state/province in which you reside. (N=1,216)

We received responses from 37 states and 4 provinces.

**Many respondents selected more than one response for this question; therefore, multiple responses were allowed in the tabulation of results.*