

Essay Topic: Cats vs. Dogs

It's an age-old debate: cat or dog? Which beloved animal makes a better pet? According to the American Humane Association, there are more cats (64.1 million) than dogs (63.8 million) in the US. However, dog households outnumber cat households. How could that be? To me the answer is plain as day: dogs make better pets than cats! Dogs are the best pet to own because they're loyal, affectionate creatures and they are easy to train.

Dogs are more loyal than cats. When arriving home, my dogs race to the door to greet me, unlike my indifferent feline friends. My dogs shower me with kisses and follow me from room-to-room as I unpack my belongings. My cats stay put, unwilling to sacrifice their comfy spot on the couch for a warm welcome for their master. When it's time for their nightly walk, my dogs will affectionately nudge their heads under my hand. As we stroll through the neighborhood, my dogs walk closely alongside me. When called, they obediently respond. I have yet to see a cat willing to walk alongside their owner or come when called. Not only do my dogs show their loyalty and affection by their excited greeting, but also in their overall affectionate demeanor. Dogs demonstrate their affection by the way they wag their tails, look adoringly into your eyes and get excitable. There's no need to guess whether a dog is happy or not; it's always evident by their appearance. For example, my dog, Sam, will plop his massive head on your lap and gaze into your eyes yearning to be scratched behind the ears. He'll nudge his big, wet nose under your hand when you try and stop, urging you to keep petting him. The expression on his face is a combination of utter bliss and contentment. My cats on the other hand, might crawl into my lap with a little coaxing, but after they've had their fill they'll nonchalantly get up and go about their business. Their affection isn't written all over their expression like it is on the face of a dog. Dogs are more loveable because of their unconditional devotion.

Furthermore, dogs make better pets because they are teachable. For example, have you ever seen a cat fetch a stick, "pound it," or roll over? Dogs can easily be taught commands like "come," "sit" and "stay." Even my little eight month old puppy, Ellie, already knows these few tricks; whereas neither of my cats obeys any of these commands. Dogs are easier to train because they respond well to treats and praise. When I have a treat in hand, both of my dogs are fully attentive. They'll do almost anything to earn their treat and therefore, are easily teachable. With repetition and positive reinforcement, training dogs is almost effortless. My Old English sheepdog learned how to "pound it" (a gesture similar to "shake") after only a few times of putting his paw on my knuckles and reinforcing his behavior with a kibble. However, my cats don't respond to treats. In fact, in the past they've rejected the treats I've tried to feed them. Cats have a will of their own and their independent nature make them difficult to train. I've never seen a "seeing-eye cat" helping people across the street; this is because cats just don't train like dogs do. Dogs can be taught to help others navigate through life and become guide dogs, specially trained dogs that help people with disabilities. This is a special job left only for a dog because they are indeed, the best pet.

Although cats make decent companions, dogs get the upper paw. A dog is the epitome of joy. It makes sense that there are more dog owners than cat owners. Dogs show their loyalty, are more openly affectionate and best of all, they're easily trained. There's truth behind the old adage, "dog is man's best friend" because dogs will forever be the greatest pet to own.