



Senior Pet Adoption

When you adopt a senior pet from the Berkeley-East Bay Humane Society (BEBHS), you'll find a calm and appreciative new friend! While senior pets usually don't require a great deal of training or vigorous exercise, they need companionship, oversight, mental stimulation, and care. Because of their advanced age, seniors have more medical considerations than younger pets. All senior animals in the BEBHS adoption program receive excellent medical care and screening for potential conditions before they are placed up for adoption.

2700 Ninth Street
Berkeley, CA 94710

P: (510) 845-7735
F: (510) 845-3652

berkeleyhumane.org



Senior Pet Advantages

Older animals have been around. Except in rare circumstances, older dogs and cats in our program have been pets before. Because of their experience, they will likely acclimate more quickly to a home environment than younger pets will. Older dogs usually know the basics and require little in the way of obedience training, but still get important mental stimulation from learning new tricks (yes, they can learn new tricks!)

Most seniors are housetrained. Older cats have long established litter box habits, and most older dogs have been housetrained for years. And, a distinguished senior pet wouldn't dream of chewing your belongings or climbing your curtains. Wouldn't it be nice to forego the months of consistency and patience you'd need to housetrain a puppy or kitten?

The pet you see is the pet you get! A mature dog or cat is done developing their personality, and offers you a stable temperament.

Seniors still have energy. Most senior dogs and cats offer a calm personality, but senior pets still require and enjoy exercise and entertainment. Some seniors even remain active well into their golden years! Your senior dog will enjoy walks, fetch, tug, and trips to the park or beach. Your senior cat will love scratching a post and stalking and chasing toys.

Seniors make wonderful, adaptable pets. BEBHS has successfully placed senior dogs and cats with single adults, families, and senior citizens in households ranging from very quiet to very active, leading us to believe that mature pets can be wonderful companions for just about anyone with time and care to give.

Senior pets are generally considered "less adoptable" because many people are reluctant to adopt an animal they may have to say goodbye to in just a few years. By adopting a senior, you are saving a life!

Senior Considerations

Seniors need more frequent veterinary care. Your veterinarian may ask you to bring your senior pet in for check-ups more often, and it's likely your pet will need extra procedures like annual blood panels (to detect problems early) and dental cleanings. Your pet will also need you to monitor him for symptoms

such as sudden weight loss or gain, increases or decreases in eating, drinking or urinating, lameness or labored breathing.

Your pet will undergo changes as he ages. Similar to changes that humans undergo as they age, pets may experience slower metabolism, changes in eyesight and hearing, graying and/or dulling fur, dry skin, incontinence, and disorientation. Mostly, these changes will happen gradually, and some may not happen at all. Please contact a veterinarian if you have concerns or questions about how your pet is changing and aging.

Adoption Checklist

In addition to the dog and cat specific things you should consider, please review the following checklist before adding a senior pet to your family:

- Consider all long-term cost and time commitments involved in owning a pet. Think about the resources you will need to spend on veterinary care as your pet ages.
- Don't paint all senior pets with the same brush! They have different personalities, activity levels, and needs. Spend significant time getting to know any pet you are thinking about adopting, and consult with a BEBHS adoption counselor if you need help making a match.
- Be prepared to enjoy every moment with your special senior pet. Because you will not have to spend much time on housetraining or obedience training, you will have free time to enjoy the company of a truly grateful companion.