



FACTS ABOUT U.S. ANIMAL SHELTERS

There are about 5,000 community animal shelters nationwide that are independent; there is no national organization monitoring these shelters. The terms "humane society" and "SPCA" are generic; shelters using those names are not part of the ASPCA or the Humane Society of the United States. Currently, no government institution or animal organization is responsible for tabulating national statistics for the animal protection movement.

- Approximately 5 million to 7 million companion animals enter animal shelters nationwide every year, and approximately 3 million to 4 million are euthanized (60 percent of dogs and 70 percent of cats). Shelter intakes are about evenly divided between those animals relinquished by owners and those picked up by animal control. These are national estimates; the percentage of euthanasia may vary from state to state.
- According to the National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy (NCPSP), less than 2 percent of cats and only 15 to 20 percent of dogs are returned to their owners. Most of these were identified with tags, tattoos or microchips.
- Twenty-five percent of dogs who enter local shelters are purebred. (Source: NCPSP)
- Only 10 percent of the animals received by shelters have been spayed or neutered.
- The majority of pets are obtained from acquaintances and family members. About 15 to 20 percent of dogs are purchased from breeders, and 10 to 20 percent of cats and dogs are adopted from shelters and rescues. (Source: Ralston Purina and NCPSP)
- More than 20 percent of people who leave dogs in shelters adopted them from a shelter. (Source: NCPSP)
- Five out of ten dogs in shelters and seven out of ten cats in shelters are destroyed simply because there is no one to adopt them.

FACTS ABOUT PET OWNERSHIP IN THE U.S.

- About 63 percent of all households in the United States have a pet. (Source: American Veterinary Medical Association)
- About 75 million dogs and about 85 million cats are owned in the United States. (Source: Pet Food Institute)
- According to the National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy (NCPSP), about 65 percent of pet owners acquire their pets free or at low cost.
- The majority of pets are obtained from acquaintances and family members. About 15 to 20 percent of dogs are purchased from breeders, 10 to 20 percent of cats and dogs are adopted from shelters and rescues, and 2 to 10 percent are purchased from pet shops. (Source: Ralston Purina and NCPSP)



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- At least 20 percent of cats are acquired as strays. (Source: NCPPSP) Many strays are lost pets who were not kept properly indoors or provided with identification.
 - More than 20 percent of people who leave dogs in shelters adopted them from a shelter. (Source: NCPPSP)
 - The cost of spaying and neutering a pet is less than the cost of raising puppies or kittens for one year.
 - The average cost of basic food, supplies, medical care and training for a dog or cat is \$700 to \$875 annually.

FACTS ABOUT PET OVERPOPULATION IN THE U.S.

- It is impossible to determine how many stray dogs and cats live in the United States; estimates for cats alone range up to 70 million.
- The average number of litters a fertile cat produces is one to two a year; average number of kittens is 4-6 per litter.
- The average number of litters a fertile dog produces is one a year; average number of puppies is 4-6.
- Owned cats and dogs generally live longer, healthier lives than strays.
- Most strays are lost pets who were not kept properly indoors or provided with identification.
- Only ten percent of the animals received by shelters have been spayed or neutered.
- The cost of spaying or neutering a pet is less than the cost of raising puppies or kittens for a year.
- Five out of ten dogs in shelters and seven out of ten cats in shelters are destroyed simply because there is no one to adopt them.