



Pets Just Want To Have Fun...!

Surprise your pet with a party or play date

By Peggy Marks

"You're invited to a party." We say and hear these words frequently. There are parties for just about everything these days—but seldom for our companion animals. Why not? Even though we don't necessarily think of a party for our pets, we should; they are members of our family and they give us unconditional love. Why not reward them with a day just for them?



Well, the meows, barks, squeaks, chirps, et al, have been heard. People have gotten on the bandwagon and are having pet parties: Amanda the Shih Tzu; Monty the cat; Popeye the Schnauzer; and even Billie Bird, have had their own special days celebrated—and want to do it again next year! You can celebrate birthdays, adoption days, graduation days, "Bark-Mitzvahs," your own special day, and dozens of other occasions. Just think how happy your pets will be seeing their furry and human friends treating them like a star! They can play, eat, and socialize to their great delight. If you just want to bond with your pet and celebrate the day together without guests, this is fine too. There are many options and choices—it's up to you. However you decide to celebrate, remember that our pets may get over stimulated by all the activities, games, and treats, and should be supervised by us at all times; so keep an eye out to make sure their day stays special and happy.

Of course, only your pet's favorite guests should be invited. For example, if your companion animal is not



so crazy about certain other animals, it might be best to keep it in the family, or just invite his favorite humans. But, for those pets who prefer their friends with natural fur, bring 'em on over!

Play Dates

Play Dates are a great way to help socialize your pet and introduce him to new animals, people and environments. All companion animals should learn how to behave

appropriately in public situations and supervised play may be the answer. Too often, our companion animals are left at home on their own because of work schedules, errands, or social events. Pets need companionship as much as we do, especially if they are an "only" pet, and pre-planned play dates can help. Setting up a play date may be the perfect solution for a lonely, bored pet. (Of course, play dates should only be set up with companion animals who are non-aggressive and who have basic social skills. Also, play dates should never be unsupervised—the companion animals' humans should be present to handle anything that may unexpectedly occur.)

Join the bandwagon by planning a celebration for your cat, dog, or even bird. Get out the calendar and set the date for your companion animal's next birthday or play date. You'll be surprised at how easy it is and you'll be delighted to see how your pet reacts to this new experience in his life.

Don't know where to begin? Not to worry, help is available. There are party planners for everything. Peggy Marks is one of the co-founders of **Mindful Tails**; she and her colleagues have successfully planned many parties and events for people and animals over the years. Contact them to plan, host, and cater the entire event. All you have to do is invite the guests so you and your pet can just enjoy the party. Visit their website for information about planning your pet's next party or play date: www.mitails.com

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