



No rude rewards

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Use a watch or clock to make sure you give pets the time you think and not less, especially if you have many pets and need to divide your attention equally. In multi-pet households it is important to reward the most polite pet not the rudest.

Use commands and leashes or separate rooms to ensure polite pets get as much (or more) attention and don't let the rude and pushy pets hog your time and love.

Reward politeness and you'll have all your pets behaving politely.

Reward rudeness and you can guess what you'll get — jumping dogs, clawing cats, books tossed aside by frisky felines and coffee spilt by big dog head nudges.

Sound familiar? Well then you need to start commanding and

rewarding polite behaviour and ignore the rudeness.

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Know and report animal abuse

(MS) - Cruelty to animals is something most people simply cannot tolerate. Whether it's an animal you know or just one you see often and feel might be the victim, witnessing animal abuse puts a person in a precarious position, as many might feel there's little, if anything, they can do.

Fortunately, that's not the case. Since a lot of folks feel as though cruelty to animals is on a par with cruelty to children, there are laws that prohibit abusing animals. For those who think they might have been witness to animal abuse, the following steps should be taken when having thoughts of turning someone in to the authorities.

· Know the laws.

What you might define as abuse might not necessarily coincide with what legislators defined as abuse when they wrote animal cruelty laws. Reporting someone for something that's not against the law could only make things worse for the animal, as a potentially abusive owner could grow even more so if he feels someone is intruding on his privacy.

Besides speaking up, the most important

thing to do is know the law. The SPCA provides information on each state's animal cruelty laws as well as any pending legislation. In addition to that, it provides information as to whom you can contact should your research confirm that what you saw can be legally defined as animal cruelty.

· Document incidents. Providing proof of child abuse can often be difficult, and doing the same for animal abuse is often more so. Since animals can't speak for themselves, they need someone to speak for them. If you're considering reporting animal abuse, then that spokesperson is now you. Whenever you witness animal cruelty, be sure to write down what exactly happened and when. If possible, photograph anything you see. Do so carefully, however, as you never know how volatile someone who abuses animals can be if they see you snapping photos of them.

Something that could help substantially is to involve others who might be witnesses as well. A "he said, she said" situation where it's you against the animal owner might not hold up, so the more witnesses you can get,

the more likely you'll be to save the animal from an abusive situation.

· Understand what reporting means for you. If you're about to report a possible case of animal cruelty, realize this is a commitment. Such an accusation is not to be taken lightly, as even abusers won't want to give up their animal without a fight. Court dates might be set, and you'll more than likely need to attend any proceedings as a witness. For genuine animal lovers, however, such a sacrifice is worth the price if it leads to saving an animal from an abusive situation.

· Be careful. Studies have shown that children who are abusive to animals often grow up to be abusive to people. In addition, adults who abuse animals may have little problem getting violent with other adults. This makes the process of reporting animal cruelty a bit more delicate, as you'll want to ensure your own safety as well as the animal's.

Don't take matters into your own hands and confront an individual; leave this up to an animal care officer or the police.