

Count the Ways Your Pet Loves You

It's Valentine's Day, and for most owners, their pet holds a special place in their hearts. Today, show your pet how much you care - and be sure to recognize the sometimes hidden (or even offensive) ways she shows you you're the center of her world.

Analysis by [Dr. Karen Shaw Becker](#)

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- It's Valentine's Day, so be sure to show some extra TLC to the furry four-legged lovebugs in your household
- Your dog shows you love in a variety of ways, including a few not-so-obvious ones, like jumping on you or chewing your belongings
- Your feline family member's devotion can also be demonstrated in oddball ways, such as head bunting or bringing you questionable "gifts"

It's Valentine's Day! Today is the perfect day to show furry family members just how much we love them, and take time to appreciate their (well-meaning, if sometimes weird!) displays of affection for us.

Some of the ways our pets show love for us are easy to understand, for example, your dog's joyful greeting when you come through the door, or the gentle bump of your cat's nose against your cheek as he seeks attention from you.

These displays of affection are easy to translate, but both dogs and cats also show devotion to their humans in surprising ways, some of which might be annoying or even offensive if you don't know how to translate them or haven't addressed them with fear-free training.

How Your Dog Might Show Affection

- Jumping up on you
- Leaning and pushing up against you
- Tail wagging
- Rolling over on his back
- Crotch sniffing
- Chewing on your belongings

Ways Your Cat May Show Love for You

- Purring
- Grooming you
- Sticking her rear end in your face
- Rubbing up against your legs

- Kneading your thighs or stomach
- Scratching your belongings

The behavior of the companion animals we share our lives with is at times fascinating and entertaining, and at other times, downright bewildering. Here are a few more examples of how the furry love of your life shows affection.

More Signs Your Dog Is Wild About You

- **Licking** — Whether you enjoy wet, sloppy canine smooches or refuse to tolerate them, licking is a form of affection for your dog, very similar to kissing in humans.
- **Locking eyes** — If your pup gazes into your eyes and there's no obvious reason for his attention (he needs a walk, for example, or he wants your dinner), he's showing his extraordinary devotion and love for you. He literally can't take his eyes off you.
- **Following you around** — If you're the primary object of your dog's devotion, she'll follow you everywhere you allow her to. She wants to be wherever her beloved human is, and she'll tirelessly follow you from room to room, or to the ends of the earth just to be in your company.
- **Using your lap as a headrest** — If your pup wanders up and rests his head in your lap, it's a sign of trust and devotion. And an invitation to pet him, of course!
- **Cuddling** — Many dogs yearn to be as physically close to their humans as possible. If your pup snuggles up next to you every chance she gets, rest assured she loves you and everything about you.

More Feline Behaviors That Signal Love Is in the Air

- **Love eyes** — Cat eyes are quite large. In fact, if your eyes were proportionately as large as your cat's, they'd stretch all the way across your face! If your kitty puts his face close to yours and stares with huge, wide-open eyes at you, then blinks slowly, he's showing you how much he loves and trusts you.
- **Rolling** — When your feline family member drops to the ground at your feet and rolls around on her back, she's saying, 'Look at me! How about a tummy rub?' Exposing her belly puts your cat in a vulnerable position, so this gesture is only extended to those she loves and trusts.
- **Bunting** — If your cat rubs against your cheek or bumps heads with you, he's leaving his scent on you. This is called "bunting" and it's a form of feline affection. Bunting is reserved for a cat's most favorite creatures — including the human he considers his own!
- **Bearing gifts** — Some cats bring their humans gifts in the form of toys, dead bugs, even mice. If your cat brings you such treasures, he's sharing his "prey" with you — a sure sign of his love and devotion. Don't forget to heap on the praise!
- **Napping on your lap** — In case you hadn't noticed, your kitty sleeps a lot. Like up to 16 hours a day! Falling asleep makes your cat vulnerable, so she'll only snooze in safe spots. If one of those spots is your lap, you should feel honored.