

Spring 2026



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Our featured pets



Meet Remi!



Remi is in the HIZZZOUSE and this is what we have to say about her!

Remi is a friendly, well-mannered 4-year-old mix who's ready to find her forever home. It's easy to see why she was a shelter favorite and why staff and volunteers worked so hard to get her safely into rescue. Her AHF foster mom describes her as the sweetest girl with excellent house manners - and yes, Remi is fully house-trained.

Remi is the perfect size (53 lbs.) and temperament. She gets along beautifully with other dogs and cats and currently lives peacefully with both in her foster home. She loves people of all ages and does great with kids, too. If you're searching for a cuddle buddy, Remi won't disappoint - she's happiest snoozing right by your side.

Remi is also crate trained, learns commands quickly, and is highly food-motivated (she even takes treats gently!). She's truly an all-around good girl, and anyone would be lucky to call her theirs.

Interested in meeting Remi (AKA interested in having your heart stolen)? Fill out a no-obligation application to learn more and see if she's the perfect match for you!

Meet Athens!



Athens is a male orange Tabby. It is estimated that he is about 3-4 years old. While spending multiple years in the Hanover Park neighborhood as a loyal stray, he's helped to keep the orange cat population active until he was trapped and neutered in May of 2025.

Due to his chill personality and sweet demeanor, his fosters could not return him to the streets. Athens was quick to make friends with his fosters, their three cats, and other foster cats over the year. He enjoys heat pads and soft pillows during the day and at night sleeps in his foster's bed. When it gets late, he will meow to let his fosters know it's bedtime.

Athens enjoys string toys, balls and fur toys, wrestling and cleaning his son O'Malley, his foster's male cat. He gets along with all cats and has a very friendly nature. He would do best with another cat as he is shy around new people.

While outside, he was known as Mr. Onion, a rakishly handsome and fierce stray. The Athens we know now is friendly and loves the good life indoors. He still isn't a fan of being picked up, but he will purr loudly when being pet at bed time. Athens will make a good addition to a family that will allow him the time to adjust and get settled in.

Dog vs Cat: a comparison of the 5 senses



We are always making comparisons: which TV program is better, which food is better, which sport team is better. It is fun for purposes of discussions. So just for fun, let's compare some characteristics of dogs and cats.

I bet you think that dogs smell better than cats. This is because they have millions more scent receptors. But cats generally have a more sensitive and nuanced sense of smell than most dog breeds, with roughly 200 million scent receptors, whereas most dogs have fewer. While specialized tracking dogs like Bloodhounds have over 300 million, cats are superior at detecting, distinguishing, and identifying subtle, complex scents.

Research has shown that the average cat has 473 taste buds while a dog has over 1,1700 which is why your dog is always begging at the table. Dogs can detect sweet, sour, salty, bitter and savory while cats can mostly detect sour and bitter. Cats mostly determine what they eat by sense of smell. This is because cats are carnivores and assess the quality of the meat they consume.

Yes, cats have better sights than dogs. Cats possess superior low-light, nighttime, and motion-detecting vision compared to dogs due to evolutionary adaptations as hunters. Their eyes contain a much higher concentration of rod cells, a reflective layer called the *tapetum lucidum* that intensifies light, and large, vertically slitted pupils designed to maximize light intake. While neither have sharp long-distance vision, dogs are slightly better at distinguishing distant objects.

The sense of touch is about the same and has the same importance to both cats and dogs. They both have sensitive paws and nerve endings beneath all that fur.

Did you hear me? Yep, both dogs and cats can hear better than humans. Cats have 9 more ear muscles than dogs bringing their total to 27 ear muscles. They can hear higher frequencies than dogs and can determine distance the sound travelled to reach them.

Did you know?

There's a lot to learn about a dog's nose. Their nostrils are shaped so that air is breathed straight in, but when they exhale, the air is pushed out the sides through those little slits you can see on their nose. Why the slits? When they do rapid sniffing, the scent is pulled into their nose, then pushed out the sides, making a continuous flow of scent.

Dogs have a special olfactory cavity that lets them smell scents without breathing too much oxygen into their lungs. This stops them from hyperventilating when they sniff a lot. Dogs recognize lots of different smells, and they can also tell how long ago a certain smell was left. The dog can tell how long ago the mailman walked by!



Ask Homer and Hope



Homer, are there benefits to dog fostering ?

Fostering a shelter dog is a selfless decision. As volunteers, foster parents offer their hearts and their homes to rescues of all ages, breeds, and physical or emotional needs. They assume responsibilities for days, weeks, and even months while caring for themselves, their families, and possibly other pets. They save dogs that might otherwise languish in crates or cages.

Why do people decide to foster? First, fostering allows them to experience daily life with a dog before making a permanent decision about adoption. It is a flexible choice since they decide when they can accept a rescue and the length of time they can commit; they also choose age, breed, and size. Generally, shelters will assume most costs including medication and vet care, so fosters make less of a monetary investment. Fosters also make adoption easier because they can share their knowledge of the dog's personality, temperament, and behavior. When "foster fails" occur, and the fosters decide to adopt, they already know about their dog.

Rescue dogs also benefit from fostering. Many of them cannot adapt to kennel life because of the noise and strange people. They need individual attention and room to move around. Some are special needs, puppies, or seniors that cannot thrive under stress. Many need skills that only a foster can teach such as walking on leash or interacting with other pets. A foster home may make all the difference for their successful adoption.

Lastly, shelters benefit from fostering. Many are overcrowded and cannot accept more rescues; less adoptable or long-term dogs may be euthanized to free up space for new arrivals. When a foster becomes available, a dog is removed from the shelter and another can be admitted, thus saving two lives. Often fosters also work adoption and fundraising events.

Hope, do cats understand what humans say?

Pet experts and researchers have concluded that cats recognize their own names, and, in multi-pet households, they may even know who's who when a human being calls out the name of other furry family members.

But recognition does not necessarily equal understanding of all the words in human vocabulary. Feline behaviorists contend that cats learn to understand words through what they call "associative concept training." Say "food" or "treat" or "play" enough times, and soon your feline friends will come running because they associate your actions with those particular words. In short, they respond to sounds, gestures, repetitive motions and expressions and stash them away in their memory banks.

We'd all like our cats to understand words of endearment, but the phrase "I love you" holds no special meaning for our furry feline friends. However, they do react when you say "I love you" in an affectionate manner and often respond with headbutts, purring or sitting close to you. A gentle, soothing tone can reassure our cat companions, while a harsh or loud voice can startle or alarm, causing them to retreat or hide.

Simply stated, cats understand human language in the same way we understand their different vocalizations. The meow is usually associated with greetings or "I'm hungry." The sweet, high-pitched trill usually means our cats are glad to see us or they'd like some "pet me" time. Chattering is associated with hunting, most often when an indoor cat sees a bird or rabbit through the window but can't get to it. And the yowl is a sound we can't ignore. It either means a cat is in pain or, in unfixed cats, it's mating time.

Whether it's through words, gestures or shared moments, you can create a communication style that works for both of you while building a strong and nurturing human-cat connection.

The importance of physical exercise and mental stimulation

Physical and mental exercise are fundamental to a dog's overall health and emotional stability. Dogs are active, intelligent animals that were originally bred for work—herding, hunting, guarding, retrieving—and even companion breeds still carry those instincts. When those needs aren't met, problems often show up in both the body and behavior.

Regular physical movement supports a dog's cardiovascular health, joint function, and muscle tone. It helps maintain a healthy weight and reduces the risk of certain conditions such as diabetes and arthritis. Active breeds, like the German Shepherd or Labrador Retriever, are especially prone to restlessness and weight gain if under-exercised, but even smaller or lower-energy dogs benefit from consistent daily activity. Movement keeps their bodies functioning properly and can even extend lifespan.

Mental stimulation is just as important, and often overlooked. Dogs are problem-solvers by nature. Intelligent breeds, such as the Border Collie, thrive on tasks that challenge them. Without mental outlets, dogs may develop anxiety, excessive barking, destructive chewing, or compulsive behaviors. These are not signs of a “bad” dog but of an under-stimulated mind. Basic training sessions, scent games, puzzle toys, and new environments all engage their cognitive abilities and build confidence. Importantly, mental work can be just as tiring as physical exertion.

Fun Fact: A focused training session or enrichment activity often leaves a dog calmer than a long walk alone.

The most balanced routine includes both movement and mental engagement—opportunities to run, sniff, explore, learn, and interact. Ultimately, exercise and stimulation are not luxuries; they are core needs. Meeting those needs supports physical health, reduces stress, strengthens the human-dog bond, and allows dogs to express natural behaviors in healthy ways.

The wet dog shake

It is an instinctive behavior for dogs to shake when wet. It removes up to 70% of water from their fur in just a few seconds. Removing the water from their fur prevents hypothermia because it restores the insulating and air-trapping properties of their coat. Wet fur loses its ability to insulate. This can cause their body temperature to drop dangerously low. Shaking restores the coat's protective function.



This reflex is triggered by special skin receptors (C-LTMRs) that detect water. Do all dogs shake at the same rate? Interesting question, but no. Smaller dogs shake at a faster frequency compared to larger dogs to generate the necessary centrifugal force. Cats also rely on this reflex for the same reasons.

Adopt, don't shop! Let's keep spreading the word!