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INSIDE!**

Pg. 35

DO DOGS  
*dream?*  
THE ANSWER IS YES!

WHY  
**HORMONES**  
AFFECT THEIR  
**WELL-BEING**

**LOUD  
NOISES**  
— TEACH  
HER TO  
TAKE SCARY  
SOUNDS IN  
STRIDE

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# PET-FRIENDLY HOME DÉCOR



THAT'S BOTH FUNCTIONAL AND FABULOUS

BY RAMONA MAREK

SHARING YOUR HOME WITH A DOG OR CAT DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN SACRIFICING STYLE. TAKE A LOOK AT HOW YOU CAN INCORPORATE YOUR BEST FRIEND'S NEEDS INTO YOUR DESIGN AND DECORATING PLANS.



Photo courtesy of Jessie Preza

One of Rachel's cats enjoys a sunny windowsill — the curtains and chair cover boast an attractive animal-friendly fabric.

Most of us treat our dogs and cats like family. And that includes making our homes animal-friendly. Not so long ago, that meant making décor sacrifices to accommodate the needs of our canine and feline friends. Nowadays, though, stylish pet-friendly décor is becoming integral to interior design, bringing elements such as beds and bowls out of hidden recesses and into front and center living (see sidebar on page 25). Meanwhile, making the right choices for flooring materials and fabrics can keep your home looking its best, even if you have multiple animal companions. From DIY projects to remodels to new builds, animal parents are redefining and redesigning living spaces that make their four-legged family members feel welcome, comfortable and safe — without sacrificing style.

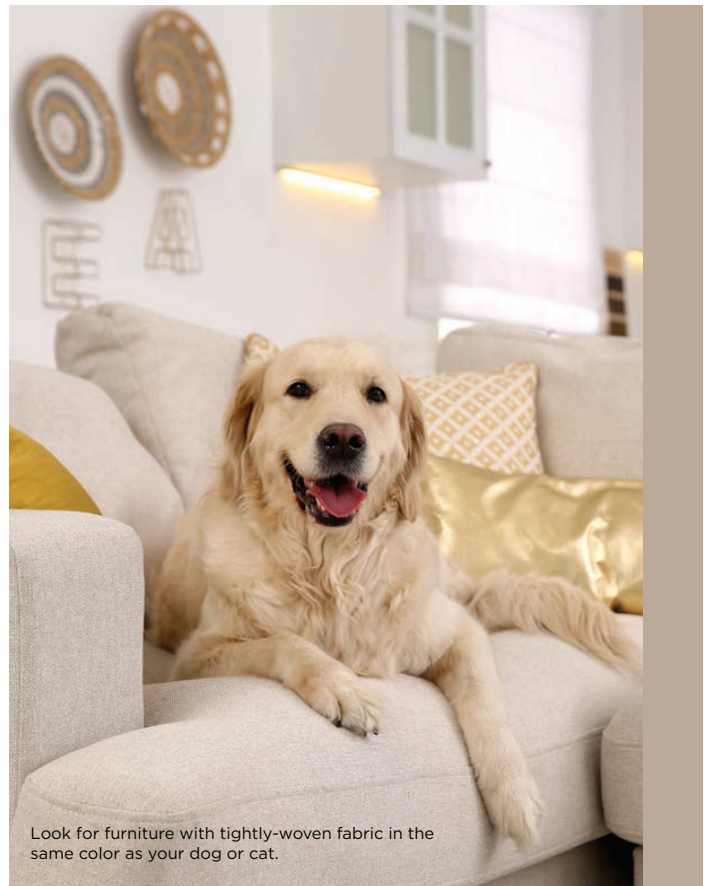
“Contrary to popular belief, [pets and stylish décor] are not mutually exclusive,” says Rachel Cannon, owner of interior design company Rachel Cannon Limited. “Fabrics and home furnishings have come a long way, allowing our interiors to look beautiful while accommodating our furry friends.”

## THE BEST FLOORING CHOICES

As any dog or cat parent knows, floors can take a beating thanks to claw marks, stains caused by accidents, spilled food and water, tracked litter, and all the other things that come with sharing your home with an animal companion. When choosing animal-friendly flooring, therefore, some choices are better than others.

Overall, you want flooring that’s durable, easy to clean, waterproof, and long-lasting. A variety of materials, in a range of price points and personal preferences, fit that need, including tile, wood, engineered hardwood and luxury vinyl. “Hard surfaces like wood or tile are usually best, but if you prefer carpet, try to find one with the Stainmaster seal so cleaning is easier,” says Rachel.

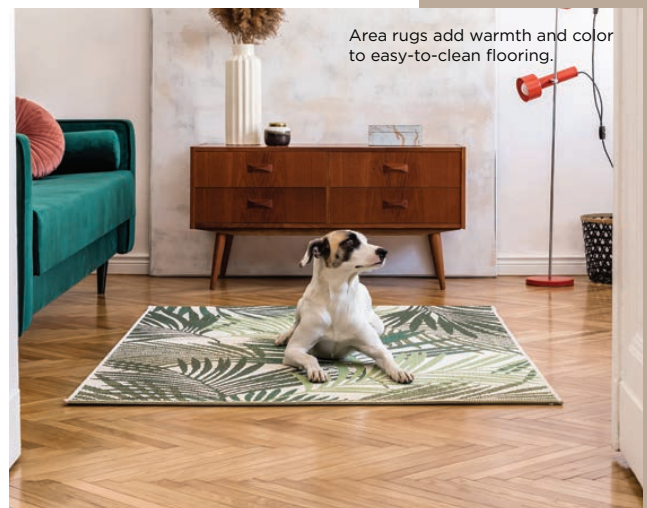
To keep carpets looking their best, vacuum once or twice a week, clean high-traffic areas every three to six months, and professionally clean the carpet twice a year. »



Look for furniture with tightly-woven fabric in the same color as your dog or cat.



An example of “barkitecture” — an old TV cabinet converted into a stylish dog bed.



Area rugs add warmth and color to easy-to-clean flooring.



### EXTRA TIPS:

- If you like carpet but not the upkeep, consider carpet squares. The individual squares can be removed and replaced if necessary, without the expense of replacing the entire carpet.
- Area rugs add a splash of color, texture, and comfort to a room. Look for materials that are washable, easy to clean, or inexpensive enough to toss when necessary.

## PERFORMANCE FABRICS ARE IDEAL

Our dogs and cats are a huge part of our lives at home. We curl up on the couch together or invite them to jump on our beds to sleep with us. And we wouldn't have it any other way. Having the right kind of fabric for furnishings and bedding makes life with animals easier, giving us more time for cuddling and playing, and less time spent cleaning.

"I always encourage clients with pets to choose performance fabrics," says Rachel. "These are fabrics that will release mud, grime, and other accidents, if you're a good human and allow your animals to get on the furniture. They're more durable than non-performance-based fabrics and will save you time and frustration when trying to remove stains."

Characteristics to look for are a tight weave and dense texture that prevent dander, dirt, etc. from penetrating the fabric. Some good choices are microfiber, denim, and canvas. You may also consider the use of outdoor fabrics for casual furniture.

### EXTRA TIPS:

- Avoid delicate fabrics such as silk, chenille and velvet. Although they look gorgeous, they'll soon lose their beauty when you have a dog or cat in the house.
- "Upholstery that camouflages animal hair is a life hack," Rachel says. "Animals shed; it's what they do! And while regularly cleaning upholstery with lint rollers (I personally have one the size of a paint



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roller) is important, you will save your sanity if you just 'go with' the idea that your animal is going to leave some hair behind. But if the dog or cat is white, dark velvet upholstery will soon become the bane of your existence, regardless of how glamorous it looks at first."

- It's a given that fabrics should be durable and easy to care for. Bedding, both your own and your animal's, should be machine washable.

Long gone is the notion that you can't have stylish décor when you share your home with a dog or cat. Add your imagination to a knowledge of available animal-friendly options, and you can easily have both!

## “BARKITECTURE” AND “PURRNITURE”

The hottest trend in animal-friendly interior design is “barkitecture” and “purrniture”, which accommodates dogs and cats with custom built-ins and other special features, including spa-like washing stations, hubs for leashes, toys, and food storage, and built-in feeding stations.

“I have three cats, so when I was renovating my kitchen, I decided to incorporate a low-level drawer for built-in food bowls,” says Rachel. “It’s very convenient and can easily be tucked away after mealtime.”

- Easy custom options include upcycling everyday items into something your dog or cat can use. For example, cats love to perch in high places, so why not create a hanging basket bed? Securely attach an attractive heavier-weight basket to the wall and add a plush, washable blanket to make a cozy cubby for your kitty. Other ideas include

converting old TV cabinets or vanities without drawers into stylish pet beds.

- If you prefer readymade options, just search the Internet for “stylish pet furniture” for all your dog or cat’s needs, from basic to bougie. You’ll find animal furniture to fit any décor, whether traditional or contemporary. Options include end tables that do double duty as dog crates.
- Cat trees and condos come in all sizes, styles, colours and materials these days, and many make unique design statements as attractive additions to living areas. Some are so striking you may want them in your home even if you don’t have a cat — yet!
- Even litter boxes can fit into home décor. Seriously stylish options include “storage benches” and “tables” that provide discreet needs for cool cats.

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