

## Apartment Pets

In U.S. cities like New York City and Los Angeles, many people live in small apartments. Despite not having homes with big yards, some apartment dwellers still seek the companionship that domesticated animals like dogs and cats offer. Some people feel that having a pet, even in a small space, is good for teaching children responsibility.

However, many landlords forbid tenants from having pets, specifically cats and dogs, because of the damage the animals can do to carpets. Some landlords even forbid birds because of the noise they make. Many landlords charge an extra fee, known as a pet deposit, to tenants who want to keep pets. This is to pay for repairs or cleaning caused by the pet.

Many times apartment dwellers will choose animals, like fish, hermit crabs, guinea pigs or hamsters, that make little noise, little mess, and won't chew up the furniture. Other people keep lizards as pets, since they don't require much space and can be kept in small cages or tanks. Another benefit of these smaller pets is that they don't need to be walked. However, some people who live in apartments have pets that are not so ordinary. Some of these less than ordinary pets include mammals like hedgehogs, amphibians like frogs, and spiders like tarantulas. Not all exotic pets are legal though.

In order to maintain public safety, some cities and states have laws banning specific animals as pets. New York City, for example, bans people from keeping ferrets, snapping turtles, pythons, and scorpions as pets. It seems unlikely that a family would have a polar bear named Fluffy or a whale named Bubbles as a pet, New York City has specific laws banning these wild animals from residences. These laws exist for a good reason. In 2003, a man in a Manhattan apartment was discovered to have a 350-pound Bengal tiger as a pet.