



PHENOMENAL FOSTER PETS

FUN PATCH LESSON



PET FOSTERING allows families and individuals to care for an animal for a short time. Fostering is VERY important for shelter pets because shelters can be crowded. Fostering a pet benefits animals and humans!

This lesson is written in the first person..." I can...I will." I can teach this lesson to my friends, my troop, and myself, or my troop leader or parent can teach it to me if I cannot read yet.

I want to help animals in shelters today AND earn a fun patch! I will learn what fostering is, why fostering animals is important, and how my family can foster and advocate for shelter pets! I can find a lot more information in the links provided throughout the lesson and at the end of the lesson.

THIS LESSON INCLUDES COLORING PAGES!

If I have a dog or cat, I can use the pages at the end of the lesson to create a masterpiece and share it with my pet, my friends, and my family.

If I do not have a pet...yet, I can choose how to paint or draw my dream cat or dog to look any way I like! One day I may have a pet who looks just like my coloring page!

1. What is animal fostering and why is it phenomenal???

- a. Over eighty-nine million families in the U.S. own pets. This is 66% of U.S. households. Adoption means caring for a pet for its entire life. Adoption is a big commitment.
- b. About 6.5 million animals go into animal shelters each year until they find a forever home. Shelters get crowded. [Find a shelter near me!](#)
- c. Learn the many [reasons animal shelters are overcrowded and ways to help](#).
- d. Fostering a pet is a **short-term commitment**. That's right! My family can foster a pet for a day, week, or month, and the shelter wants the family to return the pet! Imagine having a kitten, puppy, dog or cat to play with and show how to live in a house...I can learn how to care for it and then it is ready for its forever family. This is what is called a "win-win-win" situation.

Win #1: The pet spends time with a loving family.

Win #2: A family can learn how to care for a pet.

Win #3: The shelter helps more pets because it has more space!

2. What is fostering like for the animal and for me?

- a. Cats and dogs, like people, want stability. Imagine moving to a new house over and over? I can help with a shelter pet by giving it regular meals, a warm bed, and attention. There can be pets other than cats and dogs in shelters. For this lesson, the focus is on cats and dogs.
- b. **Foster families** feed, shelter and most importantly, LOVE a cat or dog for a short amount of time. Maybe my parents aren't sure if a pet is right for my family. **TRY FOSTERING BEFORE ADOPTING!** I will learn about what makes my foster pet happy and share it with the shelter so it can find its permanent family.
- c. **Animal shelters** do not know when more cats or dogs will need a place to stay. Shelters can become overcrowded. Animals need their space, so fostering means an animal can leave the shelter temporarily to stretch its legs and get its zoomies out.

Cats need a regular routine with food and water and a quiet place to sleep. Cats like clean litterboxes. Am I ready to clean a litterbox every day? Warning: It can be stinky.

Dogs need food and water and a quiet place to sleep. Dogs do not use litterboxes or toilets, so someone needs to walk the dog a few times a day for exercise and to use the bathroom. Am I ready to walk the dog every day, even in the rain and snow? This is a big commitment from a family.

3. How can I foster a shelter pet?

- a. How does my family prepare to foster a cat or dog or other shelter animal? I can share this link with my family to understand [what is expected from a foster family](#).
- b. Does my family rent a house or apartment? I can learn which breeds of [dogs are best for apartments](#).
- c. What if my family cannot foster? Sometimes, pet allergies, work and school schedules mean a family can't commit the time needed to foster a pet. **That is perfectly normal!** Here's the good news: There are other ways to help! There are [many volunteering and career opportunities](#) with ani

I can become a foster advocate! I have influence in many ways!

- d. I can be involved in changing laws to [protect animals in my community](#), or I can request my town or state to proclaim a day, week or month "Foster a Pet Month".
- e. I can [read to animals](#) and help them trust humans! This helps when someone wants to meet them for adoption.
- f. I can make [blankets](#) to keep shelter pets warm!
- g. I can find [summer camps](#) to learn about animals, and where to volunteer and work with animals. Learn about [how I can prepare](#) to be a veterinarian or veterinary technician! I may think of other ways not listed here!

**CONGRATULATIONS, YOU HAVE LEARNED THE
BASICS ABOUT PET FOSTERING!**

What are three ways I have learned to make the world a better place for foster pets? What ideas do I have that are not in the lesson? How will I will take action today?







KUDOS TO ME! I've earned the patch!



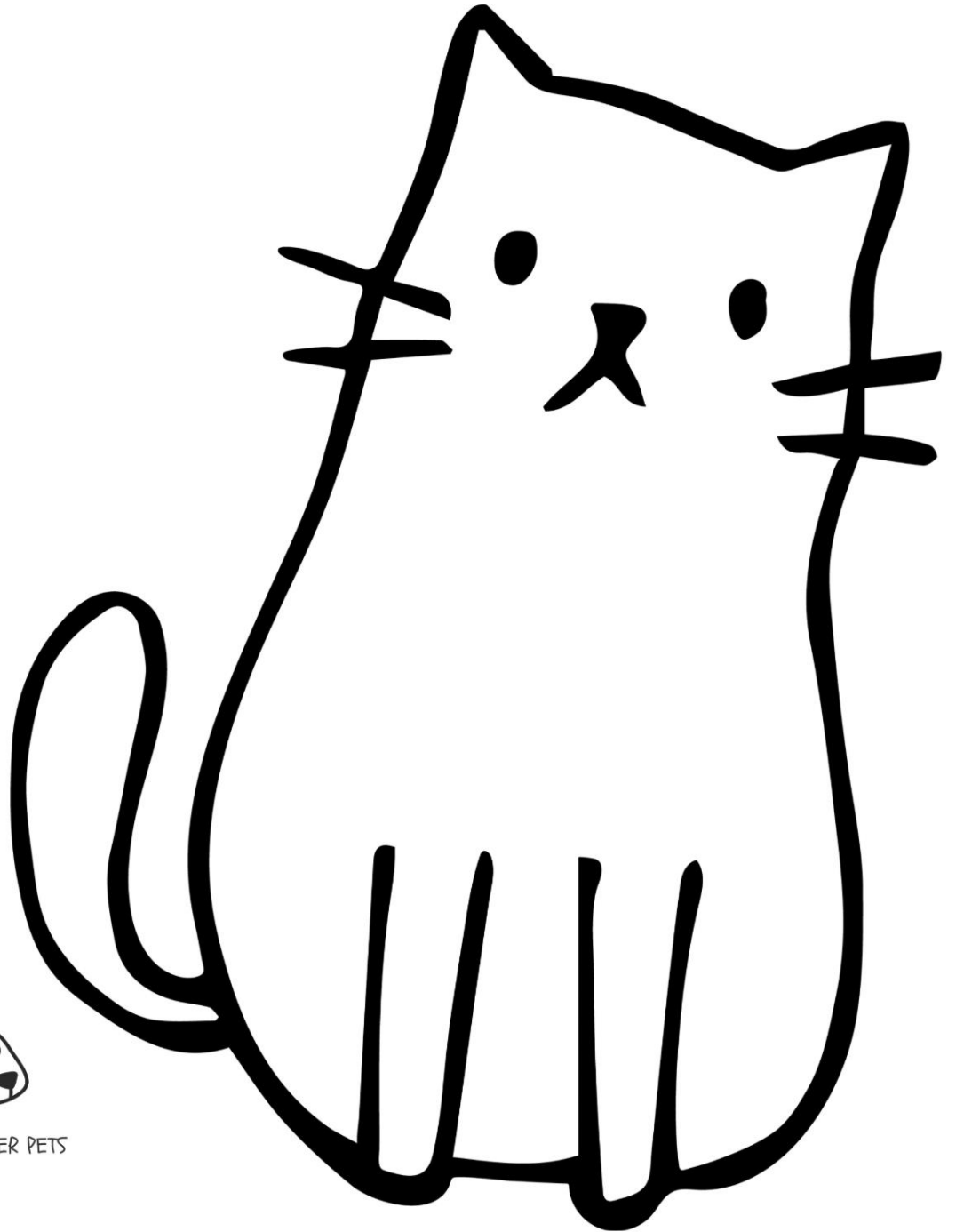
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INFORMATIONAL LINKS IN THIS LESSON

- Find a shelter in your zip code: <https://www.petfinder.com/animal-shelters-and-rescues/search/>
- Why are shelters overcrowded: <https://www.dogster.com/dog-rescue/overcrowded-animal-shelters-what-you-can-do-to-help-rescue-dogs-in-2023>
- What is fostering great for animals and humans: <https://www.fourpawsusa.org/our-stories/publications-guides/how-fostering-helps-save-lives#:~:text=With%20each%20foster%20pet%2C%20you,lifetime%20care%20of%20a%20pet.>
- Best dog breeds for apartments: [Adopt-a-Pet.com Blog 20 Best Dog Breeds for Apartment Living - Adopt-a-Pet.com Blog \(adoptapet.com\)](#)
- Laws change lives so find out how you can support local and federal laws and changes to laws that protect animals: <https://bestfriends.org/advocacy/alerts>
- Volunteering and Career Opportunities with Animals: <https://unity.edu/environmental-careers/20-cool-careers-with-animals-that-pay-well/>
- Read to animals in shelters: <https://petpartners.org/volunteer/read-with-me/>
- What cats need in a foster home: <https://felinefoster.org/what-is-cat-fostering/>
- What dogs need in a foster home: <https://www.rover.com/blog/dog-fostering-101/>
- What bunny rabbits need in a foster home: <https://bunnybuddies.org/foster-a-rabbit/>
- Preparing my home for a foster pet: <https://resources.bestfriends.org/article/cat-foster-care-manual#Introduction>
- Make blankets for shelter pets: <https://comfortforcritters.org/>
- VetSetGo Aspiring Veterinarians Resources: <https://www.vetsetgo.com/>



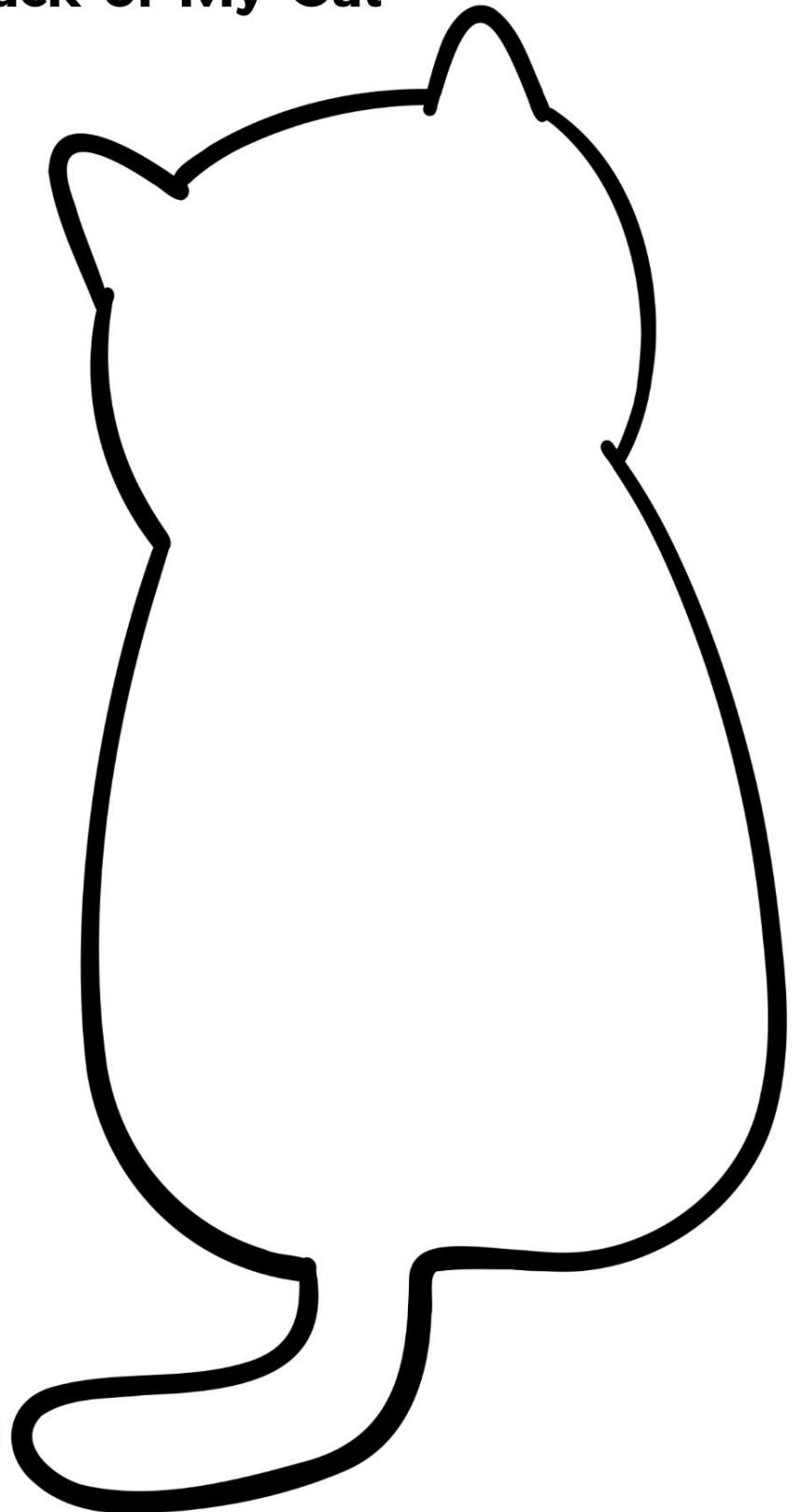
Front of My Cat



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<https://www.ilovefosterpets.com>

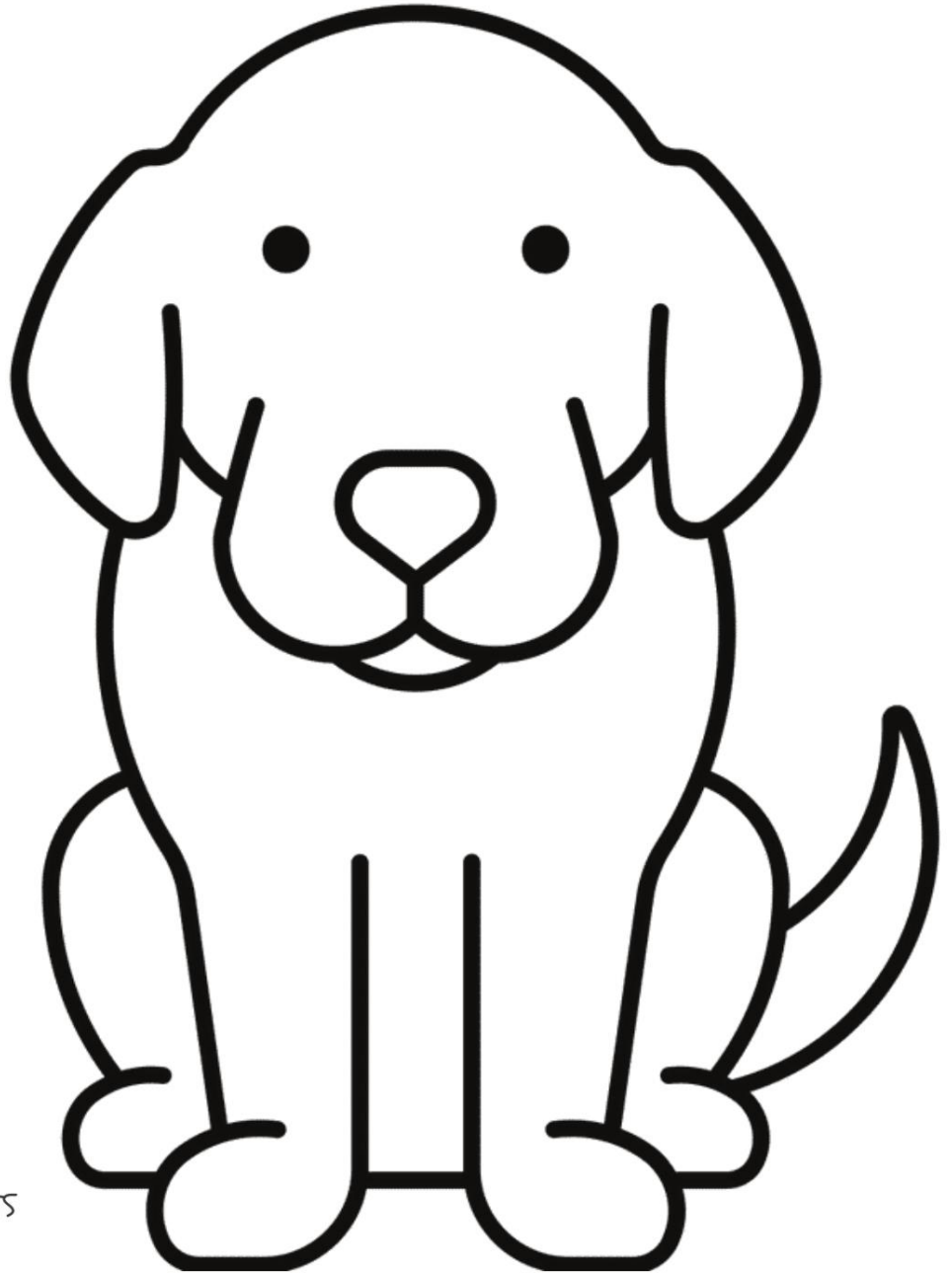
Back of My Cat



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<https://www.ilovefosterpets.com>

Front of My Dog



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Back of My Dog



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