

## Five gift ideas for pet lovers

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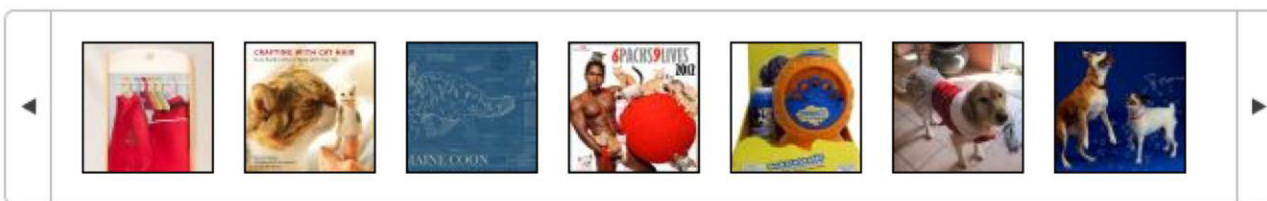
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Dog Wardrobe Closet (\$89.97) to store your dog's clothes. From DazzleDogDelight.com. Photo: DazzleDogDelight.com / HC



### Life

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Katherine Bell says her sister goes wild buying Christmas gifts for their three dogs and two cats. But it was Bell who bought Kaya the golden retriever her first Christmas outfit this year.

In a pet store with Kaya, Bell spotted the red-and-white Christmas dress and thought: "This is so cute, but it is so ridiculous." A bystander persuaded her to try it on Kaya, who wagged her tail with excitement.

"That was a total impulse buy," says Bell, a special education diagnostician in Houston.

Bell insists it is her sister, who wishes to remain anonymous for this story, who often starts handing out toys and treats before Christmas arrives to Kaya, Miss Lucy the mutt, Bella the Maltese and the cats, Toddles and Monkey.

Bell says her sister usually spends \$25 to \$30 on toys and treats for each pet.

The Christmas splurge provides toys for the whole year. Playthings that 5-year-old Kaya doesn't destroy will be scooped up, hidden and regifted.

"They are clueless that it is an old toy," Bell says.

About half of U.S. pet owners will buy holiday gifts for their pets this year, according to an Associated Press-Petside.com poll conducted in October.

Sixty-eight percent of pets will get toys, and 45 percent will get edible treats.

Spending is predicted to be up slightly, with shoppers likely to spend an average of \$46 on gifts for pets compared to \$41 last year. Seventy-two percent said they would spend \$30 or less.

For Bell's household, buying presents for the pets is a longtime tradition.

"We are buying gifts for family, and we just include them because they are members of our family," she says.

#### For pet lovers

While dogs and cats will find new collars in their stockings in addition to toys and food, don't forget the pet lovers on your gift list. Five quirky items you may have overlooked:

**Dog wardrobe closet** (Pltd/Wood Furniture, \$90-\$125). The closet comes in orange or green with a set of hangers. Check with your local pet fashion outlet or online at [DazzleDogDelight.com](http://DazzleDogDelight.com).

**Crafting With Cat Hair** (Quirk Books, 96 pp., \$14.95). This book isn't a joke. Japanese cat lover Kaori Tsutaya has combined her interests in crafting, cats and photography for a quirky book with easy projects using recycled materials, mostly wads of cat hair.

**Pet blueprint** (Animal Blueprint Co., \$110). The 18-by-24-inch cat and dog portraits are created in a 1950s blueprint style with schematics and design notes specific to each breed. Custom orders are available.

**Bubblastic Dog Bubble Machine** (Bubblastic, \$26). Who will be more fascinated by the bacon-scented bubbles: the human or the dog? Batteries not included.

**6 Packs/9 Lives calendar** (Browntrout Publishers, \$14). Men and cats. What more do you need to know? Found [Animals Foundation](http://Animals Foundation) hopes the sassy images will raise awareness of the need for pet adoptions.

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