

Chatterbox #48 – Pets

Transcript

Maura: Hello everybody, it's Maura!

Harp: And Harp!

Maura: And we're back with your Culips ESL podcast.

Harp: Yes. Make sure you go to our website, that's Culips.com—C-U-L-I-P-S.com. There, you can find all our older episodes.

Maura: And great episodes. And for all our episodes, you can get a transcript and a more detailed explanation and a quiz by becoming a member.

Harp: Exactly. So today, we're bringing you a Chatterbox episode. And this is where we chat, we talk about different topics.

Maura: Right. We might talk about something that's happening in Canada at the moment or some cultural aspect that you might find interesting.

Harp: Yes. And today, we're going to talk about pets.

Maura: Mhmm. *Pets*, which means the animals that people keep in their homes as companions.

Harp: Exactly. We're gonna break it down to talking about our experiences with pets, then we're going to talk about common pets and strange pets.

Maura: And then we're gonna talk about trends in pets in Canada and the US, and different kinds of pets that are popular.

Harp: OK, so let's get started. Now, talking about pets, Maura do you have any pets?

Maura: I do. Right now I have two wonderful, beautiful **kitty cats**.

Harp: You have two cats. Yes, I remember.

Maura: Yes. I have one big, black cat. **He's** pretty cool and laid back. **His** name is Monk. And my other cat is a little bit smaller and **she** has three colours, white, orange, and black, and **her** name is Kneesaa.

- Harp: They're cute. I remember.
- Maura: They're very nice and kind cats. And Harp, well, I know Harp does not have a pet.
- Harp: I do not have a pet.
- Maura: I know that Harp does not like pets very much. Am I right?
- Harp: It's not that I don't like pets. It's that I didn't grow up with pets at all.
- Maura: Right. So, if you haven't had a lot of experience with pets, then you might **be less open** to them.
- Harp: Yeah, exactly. And I think my experience might be a bit unique, because my parents are from India. And in India, you don't keep pets. You have animals, but they always serve some sort of purpose.
- Maura: And they stay outside of the house, I'm sure.
- Harp: Exactly. Like, you can have a dog, but really, **it's** only a guard dog. You wouldn't bring **it** inside. **It's** not **cuddly**.
- Maura: Yeah. And cats, in many places around the world, are used to keep mice away, not to cuddle with on your couch.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: But here in Canada and the US, a lot of people have pets—animals that they live with inside their house or apartment who go anywhere they like.
- Harp: Yup. My mom would never have **dealt with** that. You know, when I was young, my sister and I, we found a little kitten. We brought **it** home, we thought, "Oh, we're gonna have a cat. We're gonna have a pet!" But we knew my mom would not like **it**. And I think I was four years old at this time, but I knew my mom wouldn't let us keep this pet. So we decided to keep **it** hidden. It worked for about 10 minutes. Yeah, my mom found the cat and she took **him** to **the SPCA**. **The SPCA** is an organization that helps animals that don't have homes be matched with families.
- Maura: Well, I remember when I was young, our first pet was a cat, and we got **it** for Christmas.
- Harp: Oh yes, you told that story in another episode.

- Maura: I thought so. And that was our first cat. And then we had another cat after that, named Patches, and then my family also had a dog named Bailey. I've grown up with at least one pet around most of my life.
- Harp: Yeah. I just remembered, we actually had one pet.
- Maura: Woah! What was **it**?
- Harp: **It** was a little goldfish. And I remember, I think I was 12 years old, and my younger sister was 8 years old. And she really wanted a pet, so my mom agreed to a goldfish. We **got all** excited, went to the pet store, bought the fish, bought the little fish tank, and brought **it** home. The fish died after two days.
- Maura: Goldfish are notorious for not living very long.
- Harp: Yeah, we did not know this. My little sister was heartbroken and she insisted on having a funeral.
- Maura: Oh, cute.
- Harp: So I played some music on my piano and we had a funeral for the fish and we flushed **it** down the toilet.
- Maura: Yeah. That's typically how people get rid of dead fish which are pets, that is to flush them down the toilet. I have to say though, I find fish the least interesting pets, because you don't really have much contact with them and it's hard to know if they know you're around.
- Harp: Yeah. I think people like them 'cause they're pretty and lots of colours and you can have big aquariums.
- Maura: They're relaxing and fun to watch. I do agree to that. OK, now, let's talk about the average pet that people have in Canada and the US.
- Harp: Yes. And do you know what the most popular pet is?
- Maura: It's **gotta** be cats or dogs.
- Harp: Yes, it's dogs.
- Maura: Yeah. Dogs are, I would say, yeah, the most popular pet. A lot of people have dogs as pets. And cats have **gotta** be second.

Harp: Yes, exactly.

Maura: So when most people have a pet, **it's** usually a cat or a dog, but some people might have a rabbit, or a bunny.

Harp: Yeah, exactly. Another common pet is a guinea pig.

Maura: Right. So, a guinea pig is like a small, little, furry animal. I see a guinea pig as **a pet for kids**. So, I would say guinea pigs and hamsters and mice that are usually kept in a cage are **pets that children often have**, I think because maybe they take less maintenance than a cat or a dog.

Harp: Yeah, exactly.

Maura: And the child can also keep the animal in their room, so **it** really feels like their pet, and their responsibility.

Harp: Yes, exactly.

Maura: Those are the pretty common pets. Another common pet might be a bird.

Harp: Yup, I know quite a few people who have birds.

Maura: So there are some people who don't like to have a common, average pet and like to go for something more strange and exotic.

Harp: Yes. Some people have very interesting pets.

Maura: What kinds of pets do some people have?

Harp: Some people have big snakes as pets.

Maura: Yeah. You know, I've actually seen people, a couple times around Montreal, with huge snakes walking around, carrying **it** around, so strange.

Harp: Yeah, it scares me a little bit.

Maura: I think it scares everybody a little bit. They walk just a little bit farther away from the person carrying the snake.

Harp: Definitely. You know, when I was growing up, my school, we had a strange school pet.

Maura: What was that?

- Harp: We had a tarantula.
- Maura: Oh, creepy.
- Harp: Yeah. It's like a big, hairy spider.
- Maura: And how long did you have **it**? For a long time?
- Harp: I think at least three years.
- Maura: Oh, wow. Well, I remember when I was very young, I think my classroom had baby chicks for a short time.
- Harp: Oh, like baby chickens.
- Maura: Yeah, it was really cute.
- Harp: That would be so cute.
- Maura: Yeah, but I don't think many people have those as pets.
- Harp: No, I don't think so.
- Maura: I think I remember hearing about some American celebrity who had a pig as a pet or a monkey as a pet.
- Harp: Seems a bit strange.
- Maura: Yeah. I guess if you have a lot of money and the space to keep an exotic animal, and you want to be different and interesting...
- Harp: And as long as the animal is safe.
- Maura: Yeah, you might be into getting an exotic pet.
- Harp: Yes. OK, let's move on to our third topic—trends in pets.
- Maura: OK, so what is a trend in pets?
- Harp: Well, it's been around for a while, but I see more and more people dressing up their dogs.
- Maura: Oh, for sure. But I feel like that was more popular in other parts of the world before it became popular here.

- Harp: Yeah, I think you're right, but now it seems really popular here.
- Maura: Yeah, one of my friends has a wiener dog—or a dachshund—and he found a little jacket for a dog like that that's like a hot dog bun.
- Harp: That is so funny.
- Maura: Yeah, it's so cute. So if you can imagine this long skinny dog that already looks like a hot dog or a sausage, with a bun on either side, they end up looking like a hot dog.
- Harp: Oh, that is so funny. I would love to see that.
- Maura: Yeah. So cute.
- Harp: Very cute.
- Maura: I've also seen people who put little bows or clips in their dog's hair.
- Harp: Yeah. An interesting thing that I saw when I was living in South Korea is that some people **dye** the colour of the dog's hair.
- Maura: Wow, I've never seen that.
- Harp: Yeah. I remember seeing a little white dog, I don't know what kind, but **it** had pink ears, like florescent pink ears. It was kind of funny.
- Maura: Aw. That sounds cute too.
- Harp: What's another trend in pets?
- Maura: I don't know if it's exactly a trend, but some people like to get **purebred animals**. So, like I said, a dachshund is a specific kind of dog and it's always going to look the same and possibly have the same kind of temperament or qualities about it. And other people don't really care what kind of dog they get. And they don't know, because their dog has many different kinds of dogs in **it** and those kinds of dogs are called **mutts**, because we don't know what kind of dog it is.
- Harp: Yeah, that's a good point.
- Maura: Yeah. My family dog was a Wheaton Terrier, so we did have a **purebred** dog. And the reason was because **it** didn't **shed its** hair.

- Harp: Oh.
- Maura: Yeah. Most dogs and cats leave hair all over the place, on the couch, on the floor, but a Wheaton Terrier doesn't actually **shed**, so that's why my mom wanted to get that dog—less to clean up!
- Harp: That's interesting. OK, so, should we recap what we talked about?
- Maura: Yes. First, we talked about our experiences with pets. I love pets. Harp is not sure yet.
- Harp: I don't have any pets. Let's just leave it like that.
- Maura: And then we talked about the average pet that people have in North America and Canada, and we should also say that it's very popular to have a pet.
- Harp: Yeah, it's very popular. I don't know the exact numbers for Canada, but apparently 62% of households in the US own one or more pets.
- Maura: For sure. And the last thing we talked about was trends in pets.
- Harp: And that's about it for us today.
- Maura: So if you have an interesting or even a common pet, tell us about it. Send us a picture, or if you think that having pets inside your house is crazy, tell us that too.
- Harp: Exactly. Tell us what you think about pets.
- Maura: So, don't forget to go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.
- Harp: This has been Harp.
- Maura: And Maura.
- Harp: Bye everyone!
- Maura: Woof! Woof!
- Harp: You're silly. Bye everyone!

Detailed Explanation

Kitty cat

There are lots of names for this little pet. Most people just call them *cats* or if the cats are very young, *kittens*. Some people might also call a cat a **kitty**, as it is a cute name. When people call to a cat that they do not know the name of, they might call like this: *Here, **kitty kitty kitty kitty***. Maura says **kitty cat** together, which is also possible. It is a cute way to talk about a cat.

Here is a short list of terms sometimes used: cat, kitten, **kitty**, and **kitty cat**.

Naming pets

You can pretty much name your pet whatever you want. Some people give them typical pet names, like Fido or Spike, or some word that describes the pet's personality. There is a general trend to give your pet a name for a person, like Jack or Henry.

The names of the pets that Maura had growing up were Patches and Bailey, which are both fairly typical pet names. Patches got her name because her fur had lots of different coloured patches all over it. Bailey got her name because the colour of her fur was like the drink Bailey's Irish Cream. (Bailey can also be a name for people, male and female.)

People have often told Maura that her cats' names—Monk and Kneesaa—are weird, so here is a brief explanation of the names. Monk is a very calm cat, so got his name because monks are very peaceful and calm. Kneesaa made a strange purring sound that reminded Maura of the Ewok characters from the Star Wars movies, so she looked up Ewok names and the first one she saw was Kneesaa.

Here is a short list of other pet names chosen by people we know:

Shayne	Molly
Bird (for a cat)	Bear (for a dog)
Titan	Oliver
Ulysses	Charlie
Punkin	Chester
Lucky	Holly

Cuddly

Some pets are more affectionate than others. Cats are known to be less affectionate than dogs, but there are cats that also like to cuddle. *To cuddle* is to hold another person, or in this case an animal, close in a loving way. If a pet likes to be close to you then it can be called **cuddly**. Of course, people can also be **cuddly**, as some like physical affection more than others.

Here's one more example:

Justin: How's your new kitty?

Oscar: She's so **cuddly**. I love it!

To be open to something

If a person is described as **open** or **open-minded**, it means that the person likes to learn new things and meet new people. Someone who is **open** is accepting of everything, and could also be described as liberal.

To be open to something specific means that you are interested in it, or would like to participate in the activity. We could say that Jon is **open** to going fishing even though he has never been before. Another example could be Cindy, who says she is **open** to learning about other religions.

In this episode, Maura tells Harp that because she never had pets as a kid, she may be less **open** to them now. In this case, it is used in the negative, **to be not open**. So Harp is not interested in having a pet. Someone who is **not open** can also be said to be closed.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Andrea: What do you think we should do for Chuck's birthday?

Kevin: I don't know, but **I'm open** to anything.

Brian: It's going to be hard to figure out what to do this weekend.

Hannah: Why's that?

Brian: 'Cause **Pete's not open** to doing much. He just wants to sit around and watch TV.

To deal with

At Culips, we have discussed the word **deal** many times in the past. There are even different ways to use the expression **to deal with**. In this episode, **to deal with** is used to mean *to tolerate*. This expression is often used in the negative form, like in this episode.

Harp says that her mom would never have **dealt with** having an animal live in their house. (**Dealt** is the irregular past tense of **deal**.) Her mom would not have tolerated that. Through

Harp's stories, we know that it's true, because Harp and her sister had to give away the kitten they found.

Here are a couple more examples with **to deal with**:

George: I'm so sick of my girlfriend always cancelling on me. I can't **deal with** it anymore!

Sylvie: So are you going to break up with her?

Bonnie: Are you going to be able to take care of five kids alone this weekend?

Luke: I can **deal with** it. No problem.

Some synonyms of **to deal with** are *to stand* and *to put up with*.

The SPCA

SPCA stands for Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. This organization is involved in helping animals in many ways. What this society is mostly known for is keeping animals, mostly cats, dogs, birds, and rabbits, that do not have a home. People can adopt a pet from the **SPCA** for a small price. This price always includes operating on the animal so that they can not reproduce.

There are **SPCAs** across Canada and the United States, as well as in many other countries.

To get all something

This is a slang way to say that someone is behaving or feeling a certain way. **To get all** should be followed by an adjective, like **to get all crazy**. As an example, to use **to get all crazy** means that people are becoming completely crazy. **To get all hungry** means that people become hungry. In this episode Harp says, "**we got all excited**," which means that everyone got very excited.

Here is another example with this expression:

Wilma: How was karaoke last night?

Irene: It was really fun! Jen **got all** silly and did a bunch of songs by herself.

To flush a fish down the toilet

When a pet fish dies, the most typical thing to do is **to flush the fish down the toilet**. This is an easy and safe way to dispose of a small, dead fish. Like Harp says, when their goldfish died this is just what they did after the little funeral. Some people do have funerals for their pets too.

When a pet cat or dog dies, it is usually the SPCA that comes to pick it up. Some people might also bury their pets in a pet cemetery or bring it to their veterinarian to be cremated.

Gotta

Gotta is the abbreviation to show the slang pronunciation of **got to**. The meaning of **gotta** or **got to** is *must*. **Gotta** is very common but should not be used in professional situations. It should also never be written, except for in very casual correspondence. We include this word and others like it (wanna, kinda, gonna) in our transcripts to help you see how the hosts use it in everyday, casual conversation.

Pets for children

Any pet can be for a child, and often children have to take some responsibility for the family pet. Some pets, though, are more specifically for children and are less likely to be owned by a single adult.

Here is a short list of typical children's pets:

Guinea pigs
Gerbils
Snakes

Mice
Turtles
Goldfish

To dye hair

A funny trend that Harp saw in Asia was dying your pet's hair. **To dye** means *to colour*. This means that Harp saw dogs with different coloured hair, like pink or purple. **Dye** is a material that transfers a colour to another thing, like hair or fabric.

Purebred animals

Purebred animals (or simply **purebreds**) are specific types of animals within a species. To keep a family of dogs purebred, a purebred dog is only allowed to have puppies with the same type of dog, thus being sure to produce that kind of dog. In addition to the physical characteristics, different breeds are also known for certain kinds of personalities, like being friendly or very intelligent. The **purebred** dogs that we talk about in this episode are dachshunds and Wheaton Terriers, but there are hundreds of breeds of dog.

You may be able to adopt a **purebred** dog from the SPCA, but if you want a specific kind of dog, you have to go to a breeder, someone who breeds a specific type of dog. Purebred dogs cost a lot more than dogs from the SPCA. Some people even give dogs away, but these are almost never **purebred**.

You can also get **purebred animals** other than dogs. It is less common that people buy **purebred** cats, but it is possible.

Mutts

Mutts are quite the opposite of purebreds. A **mutt** is a dog with no specific breed or many different breeds. Often, dogs at the SPCA are **mutts**. **Mutt** can only be used to describe dogs, no other kinds of animals.

To shed

Lots of animals have hair or fur, which means that there will often be hair left around your house because animals **shed**. **To shed** is to let fall, and so when animals **shed**, they leave their hair on the floor, on the furniture, or on people.

It or he/she for pets

When people want to use a pronoun for animals, you might hear *it* or *he/she*. When the sex of the animal is not known, *it* is typically used. Also, people who are not close to the animal or are not speaking about a specific animal may use *it*. When pet owners talk about their pets, they almost always use *he/she*. This is likely because they are close to their pet and are speaking about a specific animal.

People who love animals generally take the time to ask if the animal is male or female, while people who are less interested or do not have a pet of their own are more likely to just use *it*.

Here are a couple of examples using *it* or *he/she*:

Brad: Hey! Look at that dog over there. It's peeing on your car!

Mike: I got a new puppy on the weekend. He's so cute!

Quiz**1. What cannot be a pet name?**

- a) a funny name
- b) a person's name
- c) the name of a different animal
- d) Pets can have almost any name

2. Randy is open to meeting someone new since he broke up with his girlfriend.**What is definitely true about Randy?**

- a) He is willing to meet someone new.
- b) He does not want to meet someone new.
- c) He is still sad about his ex-girlfriend.
- d) He is out talking to someone new right now.

3. Andy: I can't _____ all the stress at my new job, I think I will have to quit.**Please fill in the blank.**

- a) deal in
- b) deal with
- c) deal out
- d) deal without

4. Linda: She _____ sad when we started talking about the past.**Please fill in the blank.**

- a) got all
- b) got no
- c) got and
- d) got any

5. What is the name for dogs that are a mix of breeds?

- a) dachshunds
- b) Wheaton Terriers
- c) mutts
- d) purebreds

6. Janis: My friend's new dog is really small, and ___ is so calm.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) he
- b) she
- c) it
- d) They are all possible, because we don't know the sex.

7. What is the SPCA?

- a) a special breed of dog
- b) an organization that helps protect animals
- c) a kind of cat
- d) a pet toy

8. Which is the slang way to pronounce *got to*?

- a) gonna
- b) gotta
- c) gotten
- d) going to

Answers: 1.d 2.a 3.b 4.a 5.c 6.d 7.b 8.b