



# Pets & People

## Making A Connection Between Your Pet And Your Date

(NAPSA)—When you've made a "love connection" and feel it's time to introduce your two-legged companion to your four-legged friend, here are a few tips from the nation's leader in pet adoptions, PetSmart Charities, and the world's largest dating website, Match.

They have teamed up to reveal the important role that pets play in our dating lives.

### Start With A Photo Session

Before you set up the in-person meeting, share or exchange photographs of your pets. It's an easy way to give the new person in your life an idea about the role your pet plays in your world.

### Keep The Energy Positive And Mellow

When you walk in the door, keep moving—put your stuff down, hang your coat, get all the way in the house and free up your hands, then greet your pet.

If your date is with you, he or she should follow this approach, too. It lets the "you're home!" energy fade before anyone interacts with your pet, so she's calmer. That's especially important when you're with a guest.

### Don't Force It

It's natural to be a little nervous. You and your date already like each other, so it's important to you that your pet feels the same way. A recent PetSmart Charities and Match survey found that women are more likely to judge their date based on their pet's reaction—almost half of women do it, and 30 percent of men do, too.

Even though you're eager, don't push it. You know how intuitive



**A recent survey found that almost half of the women questioned and about 30 percent of the men judge their date based on their pet's reaction.**

your pet is, right? She'll pick up on any awkward, uncomfortable energy right away, which will make her edgy and turn her off to the whole situation.

However, if you take a deep breath and stay relaxed, chances are your pet will also stay relaxed. Behave as naturally as possible, speaking in your normal voice. Stay involved in the introduction for the first few minutes. Try sitting on the floor together so all three of you are participating in the meeting.

Following these tips will help you navigate the first meeting. When you date someone, you're looking for signals. Similarly, you should watch for cues from the pet to tell you what your next move should be. In the meantime, just hang out, relax and give your pet some time to adapt to the change.

For more information about PetSmart Charities and its adoption programs, visit the website at [www.petsmartcharities.org](http://www.petsmartcharities.org).