

## Common Myths Busted!

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## 1. Dogs are color blind

**The truth:** Dogs do see in color. However, they see differently than most people do and are less able to distinguish between colors. Veterinary ophthalmologists have determined that dogs see like people who have red/green color blindness. Dogs' eyes have receptors for blue and green shades, but not for red shades. As a result, it appears that dogs cannot easily distinguish between yellow, green and red, but they can identify different shades of blue, purple and gray. Color is only one of many visual stimuli that dogs detect in their environment. Brightness, contrast, and especially motion, are extremely important to a dog's interpretation of what it sees.



## Can Dogs see in color?

First Annual SWVH  
Holiday Food Drive

Thank you to everyone who donated canned food (pet and/or human) during the first SWVH annual food drive. It was a great success and we look forward to next year!

## 2. Cats always land on their feet

**The truth:** This is perhaps one of the most widely known and dangerous of all myths regarding cats, because unfortunately many children have tried to prove that it is true. It is not. Cats are indeed very athletic and agile animals, and they do have a unique instinctive ability to twist themselves around in mid-air to correct their position during a fall. However, if a cat is surprised, sick, disoriented or injured, it is less likely to be able to adjust its position to land feet-first. Of

How many lives do cats  
really have?

course, if it falls from a great height, a cat's ability to reposition itself will not matter, because the force of the fall will cause serious injury or even death whether or not the cat's feet hit the ground first. Moreover, if a cat falls from a short height, it may not have enough time to twist around and land on its feet.

## 3. If a dog's nose is warm, it means it's sick

**The truth:** If a dog has a dry or warm nose, it means that he has a dry or warm nose. A dry nose or a mildly warm nose has nothing to do with the overall health of a dog.

## 4. If a dog is wagging its tail, it is happy

**The truth:** In many cases, a dog that is wagging its tail is happy, or at least is expressing excitement or pleasure. Tail-wagging certainly does express a strong state of emotion, much like a smile does in people. However, just like a human smile, a dog's wagging tail does not necessarily reflect happiness or something positive. Dogs frequently wag their tails when they are agitated, irritated, tense, anxious, annoyed, frightened, angry or aggressive. Interestingly, researchers have found that dogs do not normally wag their tails when they are alone, even if they apparently are happy or are in a pleasant situation. Tail-wagging seems to be a behavior that is reserved for times when the dog is in the company of others.

## 5. Cats have nine lives

**The truth:** Of course, cats do not "have nine lives." Cats are mortal. However, they do tend to be very healthy, hearty animals that can take care of themselves in most any situation, whether indoors or out. They are nimble, intelligent and resourceful. But, like all other mammals, cats only have one life to live.

## 6. A dog's mouth is cleaner than a human's mouth

**The truth:** A dog's mouth is not "cleaner" than a person's mouth. Dog saliva can be toxic to some bacteria, but it carries its own population of bacteria and other infectious organisms. That population is just different from the assortment of bacteria and other "germs" in the human mouth, based largely upon differences in diet. There is a reason for the term, "dog breath." People with weakened immune systems and young children probably should not have direct contact with dog or cat saliva.

## 7. You can't teach an old dog new tricks

**The truth:** You can teach an old dog new tricks. Dogs can learn new tricks, skills and commands within their physical capabilities until the day they pass away. What's more, they usually want to learn. Their minds need stimulation, just like ours. With patience, kindness, persistence and consistency, owners can teach their older dogs all sorts of new tricks, such as sit, bark when the doorbell rings, fetch, lie down, roll over, play dead and shake or "high five." As long as a dog is bright, alert, responsive and healthy, there is no reason that he cannot keep learning new things throughout his life.

Check out youtube video: [Myth busters](#)

## 8. Cats purr because they are happy

**The truth:** Most cats do purr when they are happy. However, that is not the only time they purr. Cats will sometimes purr when they are sick, stressed, injured, frightened or in pain. They also can purr when they are giving birth, and even as they are dying. Purring seems to be more an expression of some strong emotion - whether positive or negative. Purring by a cat might be similar to humming or whistling by a human: it commonly is done out of happiness, but it may also be done as a result of stress, fright or discomfort.

## 9. Cats can see in the dark

**The truth:** Although cats do see better in semi-darkness than people, they cannot see in total darkness. The pupils of their eyes open much wider in dim light than those of people, letting in more light during the normal hunting hours of dawn and dusk. But again, cats cannot see in complete darkness.

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February is Pet  
Dental Awareness

At SWVH, pet dental health is a year-round priority. Whenever your dog or cat is examined, our staff and doctors evaluate your pet's teeth. Periodontal disease is a bacterial infection caused by dental plaque. In both human and veterinary medicine studies have demonstrated a strong association between periodontal disease and distant organ/systemic disease. Tooth and gum health is of critical importance! SWVH will help you develop a plan for your pet for optimal health.



Most dogs, and even cats can enjoy to learn to love tooth brushing by their owners!

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