

ASK OUR VETERINARIANS



Dear Dr. Schmidt, My cat Claws just turned 1 year old. How old is that in human years? Thanks, Cindy

Dear Cindy, It all depends on who you talk to. If you ask a cat, well, they don't really care. But we seem to want to compare them to us. So, here are a few different sources that try to compare pet years with people years. The old "7 year" rule is just that, "old". We try to compare apples to oranges, and it can get pretty tricky, but here goes. The "new" rule is that a 1 year old cat is equivalent to a 15 year old person. A 2 year old cat is about mid 20's. A 3 year old cat is pushing 30 years old. After this, using a "4 year" rule fits pretty well when comparing maturity of cats to maturity of people. For example, a 6 year old cat would be about 40 to 42 years old, and a 12 year old cat about 65 years old, etc. Also, a lot of it has to do with whether he lives outside all the time, goes freely inside and outside of your home, or stays inside 24/7. The more he goes outside, that may shorten his life expectancy because of all the possible bad things that can happen to him. And, in case you were wondering about dogs, they have a slightly different aging scale because of the wide variety of breeds and sizes. For example, a Yorkie may easily live into their late teens and beyond. However, a Great Dane is pushing it at 10 years old (of course there are many variations within each breed too, just like people). Anyway, a one year old dog is equivalent to an 18 year old, a small jump to only 21 years old at 2 years old. After that, we can use a "5 year" rule to fill in the rest of their years. Again, breed variations make it a little harder with dogs, and there are different charts designed by different people. But this should give you a general idea of how pets age as compared to people. Hope this helps put things in perspective for you, Cindy. Take good care of Claws and he should live to be a hundred . . . that's about 20 years old in cat years!

Submitted by: Dr. Doug



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