

Pets and the law quiz (answers)

1. You can legally own a pet from the age of 10.

False – under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, you can only legally own a pet from the age of 16.

2. If you are looking after someone else's pet, you are not legally responsible.

False – if you are temporarily in charge of an animal, you have a legal responsibility for it. However, if you are under 16, your parent or guardian is legally responsible for the animal.

3. It is illegal to keep your cat inside all the time.

False – this is not illegal, as long as the animal's needs are being met and the cat is not showing signs of distress as a result of being confined. Most cats like to go outdoors but if the cat is able to express normal behaviour and has enough room to move around indoors, then it is OK to keep it inside.

4. It is against the law to buy and sell endangered species.

True – there are Customs and Excise regulations that prevent endangered species being imported. In the UK it is illegal to trade in certain endangered species.

5. By law, you must take your animal to the vet at least once a year.

False – under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, as long as your animal is not suffering you do not need to take it to the vet regularly.

6. Pet birds do not need to be able to fly in their cages.

True – it depends on the size of the bird and the size of the cage, and whether the bird's needs are being met inside the cage. It is only a legal requirement that birds kept in captivity have enough room (in all directions) to stretch their wings freely.

7. Dog fighting is legal as long as you have a licence.

False – all animal fighting is illegal. This includes training an animal to fight and being present at a fight.

8. It is illegal to keep a rabbit in a hutch if it can't sit up on its back legs.

True – the Animal Welfare Act 2006 states that animals should be able to display natural behaviour. For rabbits, this includes being able to sit up.

9. It is illegal to give an animal as a prize to a child.

False – however, under 16s must be accompanied by an adult who must agree to accept the prize.

10. It is illegal to allow animals used in experiments to suffer.

False – there is no law specifically related to the suffering of animals used in research. However, all uses of animals in research must be licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, which imposes strict conditions.