



HIGH-TECH PRODUCTS FOR PETS

**OPTIMIZE YOUR LIFE
AND THEIRS
WITH THE LATEST
ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS
FOR DOGS AND CATS.**

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illustration BLINDSALIDA/MENDOLA

Smart technology has changed the way we interact and run our lives. Similarly, pet care has gone digital too. Fueled by the human-animal bond, the rapid growth in pet technology has unleashed devices and gadgets that allow pet parents to stay connected to their fur kids 24/7. The latest pet tech products also offer innovative and practical solutions to everyday problems around the home.

CALMING SEPARATION ANXIETY

It's fun to spy on your dog or cat using a pet video cam, but such surveillance also has a serious side. It allows pet parents to see if a stressed-out dog is pacing anxiously or make sure a rambunctious puppy is not eating their favorite sofa cushions.

Other gadgets operated remotely offer enrichment to pets who are home alone. From literally anywhere,



CALORIE CONSCIOUS

Keep your pet's weight under control with the Portionpro Rx Feeder, a smart feeder that automatically measures and dispenses the right amount of kibble for the authorized dog or cat. RFID technology controls access to the food via a collar tag that opens the lid only when the authorized pet approaches. \$299; Vet Innovations Inc.; portionpro.com



pet parents can play soothing music, dispense treats, emit wafts of calming aromatherapy sprays, and initiate interactive games to keep pets both mentally active and physically engaged.

"Prior to the tech age, I used to prerecord an owner's voice and play it on a tape loop to help ease separation anxiety in dogs," says Nicholas H. Dodman, BVMS, DACVA, DACVB, co-founder of the Center of Canine Behavior Studies (CCBS).

Of course technology has changed everything. Dodman recently led CCBS research in which a PetChatz treat dispenser was installed in an animal shelter in order to stream DogTV (a 24/7 cable channel developed specifically to soothe canines). Researchers measured the dogs' behaviors before, during, and after the DogTV experience.

"There was good evidence that the dogs' behavior changed for the better—indicating calmness," he says.

MAKING LIFE EASIER

Pet technology solves a multitude of problems. Electronic food bowls (which work with a pet's existing microchip or a separate RFID collar tag) open only when a registered pet approaches—which means the food can't be stolen by other animals. Some smart feeders can be programmed to feed multiple pets their daily allowances, as long as they eat the same food. And smart water

bowls monitor water intake to ensure proper hydration.

Electronic pet doors control which animal can leave or enter the house; some include curfew modes to keep all pets indoors at night. Self-cleaning litter boxes activate when the cat is safely out of the way and make it possible for you to avoid touching—or smelling—dirty litter altogether. Noise-canceling pet beds offer a haven when thunder rumbles.

Lightweight GPS trackers designed for both big and small pets allow pet parents to set up safe zones at home or when traveling. The human gets an alert should a fur kid attempt to wander out of the zone.

KEEPING PETS HEALTHY

Tapping into human fitness trends, wearable pet health devices determine how long your pet snoozes, track pet steps and activity levels, and monitor heart rates and respiration. Some models can even relay your pet's health dashboard to your veterinarian.

And you can now take a nap without leaving your dog bored. Automated ball launchers empower your dog to play fetch alone when all you want to do is relax—especially if you teach him how to reload the machine.

Have no fear if you're tech-averse: As technology gets smarter, these devices are becoming cheaper, more accessible, and easier to use.

TRACKING ROVER'S ACTIVITY

Look after your dog in a whole new way when you attach the Anima, an activity and behavior monitor, to his collar. The Anima learns and interprets your dog's behavior patterns 24 hours a day, forwarding the data to an app on your Android or iOS phone to help you make decisions regarding his care. \$90; Sure Petcare; surepetcare.com



EASY, BREEZY EXERCISE

Keep your pooch fit and entertained with this waterproof launcher designed for indoor and outdoor play. The Automatic Ball Launcher features nine distance settings (between 8 and 30 feet) and six angle settings to keep poodles constantly engaged. An automatic sleep mode ensures rest periods between frantic play sessions. \$160; PetSafe; store petsafe.net/automatic-ball-launcher

GETTING A NEW WORLDVIEW

Capture short bursts of footage from a pet's viewpoint with a 1.13-ounce video camera that fits on Kitty's collar, and transfer that video to a computer via a USB cable. Also suitable for small dogs, the fYenimal Cat Video Cam comes with an integrated microphone, 2 hours of battery life, and 4 gigabytes of flash memory. fYenimal; \$99; idealpetproducts.com

