

Do Animals Like Music?

VetDepot



"I don't know what this is, but I think I like it!"

Do you happen to have a playlist that you made just for your dog? Have you ever wondered what kind of music your cat likes? Well, it actually may not be that weird, because there is mounting evidence to support that certain animals like certain types of music. In fact, there are several different sources that make music specifically tailored to pets' ears! The most notable one being [Music for Cats](#), an ongoing project that is (according to their site) "verified by science." They have been working on this project for over six years, and was recently [crowdfunded successfully](#) to keep the study and the music going! Soon there will be an album just for feline ears to enjoy, and the same musicians aim to create music for as many other animals as they can. In the meantime, what kind of music can you play for your animals? Well, you can play your normal music that *you* enjoy, but your rabbit, bird, iguana, etc. may not even appreciate it. Heck, they may not even *hear* it.

You may feel like you and your companion animal are “one in the same,” but science says otherwise – especially when it comes to our sensory systems. Most animals (if not all) have completely different sensory organs, which therefore makes their ability to hear music extremely different than our own. In fact, many of our music (especially pop and rock music) is filled with sounds that our animal friends cannot even hear. According to research, animals seem to enjoy “species-specific music” – music that is specifically made up of the pitches, tones and tempos that their particular species can not only *detect*, but which quite literally resonate with them. Therefore, if a particular music style is filled with the sounds that their species’ system is hard-wired to recognize, the animal therefore “enjoys” the music! Makes sense, right?



Humans have a vastly different vocal range and hearing ability than dogs do – the most common example being the dog whistle, which is an age-old device humans have used to make an extremely high-pitched noise (not able to be heard by humans) in order to call their dog to them. It’s a well-known fact that dogs, cats, and other pets can hear many sounds that we cannot, and it goes without saying that the reverse is true as well. Not to mention, their systems also cannot grasp certain tempos, so if a song is too fast, it could either be unrecognizable or just a jumbled mess in their ears. Heartbeat has a lot to do with their music preference as well, with music that is close to

their BPM being the most palpable.

Based on research conducted thus far, it seems that most animals prefer classical or orchestral music, which shouldn't be a surprise considering the universal agreement that this particular type of music is beautiful. Most modern music with drum beats designed to get humans dancing, is actually met with indifference (and sometimes annoyance) by animals; especially certain types of rock and roll, electronic dance music, and pop that have fast-paced drum loops and percussive sounds. One of the composers of Music for Cats, David Teie, says:

"We have some work-in-progress where we've transposed music and put it in the frequency range for cat vocalizations, and have used their resting heart rate, which is faster than ours," he told Life's Little Mysteries. "We find that cats prefer to listen to the music composed in their frequency range and tempo rather than human music."



Although Music for Dogs is obviously their next project in the works, dogs are a more difficult animal to create music for due to the great variances between breeds in size – which is directly related to their heart rate as well as vocal/acoustic range. Although there are many different cat breeds, the size differences between them are minimal and their bodily systems are extremely similar. On the other hand, the music that a Chihuahua or Yorkie may enjoy will most likely be very different than the music made for a Pit Bull or Mastiff – so it will take a considerable amount of time and effort to create a discography of music for all dog breeds.

So basically, your pets – no matter big or small they are – will probably enjoy soft classical music or what you would consider as “easy-listening” or “new-age” music. Ambient sounds, with very little syncopation (or none), and consistent melodies and harmonies. Charles Snowdon, one of the most prominent researchers in the field of animal music preferences, has a very interesting theory about the extent of how much animals can appreciate music. He doesn't think that animals can possibly enjoy music to the extent that humans are able to:

"We can recognize that a sequence of notes is the same whether it's in the key of F or A flat," he said. "I have found that animals have very good absolute pitch, but they don't have relative pitch. They can learn to recognize a sequence of notes, but if you transpose the notes to a different key, so that the sequence uses the same relative notes but the key is different, they can't recognize the relationships between the notes anymore."



As long as your animal isn't visibly agitated (apparently heavy metal music is proven to be the most aggravating to animals' ears), it will probably put up with any music that you play. But, it could be helpful to try some different types of calming music if you and your pet are in need of some relaxation and quiet!