

Pet care – How to Care for Dogs

Pet care was made into levels depending on the type of animal. So dogs, cats and fish are their own level. No preference was given to the order because the author has had all three as pets. So let's get started with the care of dogs

Your dog is more than just a pet, just like any animal that you bring into your home. Your dog is a member of your family. Your dog must be treated with respect and cared for in a manner that will prolong his or her health and make their stay with you enjoyable. There are a few basic things you should do to care for your dog.

- Collar your dog and attach an ID to it, with the dog's name, your name, address, and telephone number written on it. The ID will prove to be a great help if, and when, your dog ends up getting lost. Through the information provided on the ID, someone will be able to bring your pet safely back to your home.
- Register your dog in the community where you live. This way if it is found they can easily trace the dog back to you, its owner.
- Bathing your dog at regular intervals is necessary. However, giving it a bath on an exceedingly frequent basis can dry out its skin and coat and result in skin infections. The best bet would be to bathe your dog once in a month. In case it gets too dirty in-between, rub it with a damp towel or wash just the paws.
- While bathing the dog frequently is not advisable, you should definitely groom it on a daily basis. Move a brush or comb through the hair of your dog, ensuring that its coat remains smooth and free of tangles. Grooming of a dog can be started when it is 3-4 months old and continue it throughout its life.
- It is necessary to undertake a proper physical examination of your dog on a monthly basis. Check the pad of its feet for any injuries and also undertake an oral examination of its mouth. At the same time, make sure to keep its ears as well as teeth clean. You need to take your dog for regular veterinarian check-ups as well. Depending on the health of the animal this may be as frequent as every 2-3 months or at least once a year.
- One of the main points that you need to keep in mind is its diet. Remember, a nutritionally balanced diet, with constant access to fresh water, is as good for your dog as it is for you. Before deciding on the proper diet for your dog, it is advisable to consult a veterinary doctor.

- If you want your dog to remain fit and healthy, then you need to make sure that it gets a lot of exercise. Keeping its busy physically will also help keep behavioral problems at bay. You can take him for walk twice a day or play with him. In this context, remember that the level of exercise that your dog should get depends upon its breed and age.
- While some people prefer to keep their dog free throughout the day, others prefer to keep it tied up or in a cage for majority of the time. It is advisable not to keep your dog constantly contained or tied up, as this will lead to boredom and result in instilling temper problems with the dog as well. As much as possible, keep your dog free of the leash. There are leash laws in many communities so if you are taking you dog outside you may be required to keep it on a leash.
- If you do not want to breed your dog, get it neutered, after consulting a veterinary doctor. It will help the dog live longer, be healthier and have fewer behavior problems. You should also get your dogs vaccinated against rabies and other diseases. It is necessary to ensure the health of your dog as well as those who come in contact with it. If you board your dog you will need to keep the dog up to date on all its vaccinations.
- You need to provide proper shelter for your dog, mainly in the form of a dog house (and fence yard, in case of large and active dogs). However, most of the dogs crave companionship and do not like to be alone for long periods. So, try to spend as much time with your dog as possible and make it go into the dog house at night only

We are now going to go into more detail on some of these topics

As a dog owner, you want to know you are meeting your dog's basic needs to ensure health and happiness. Like humans, dogs need food, water and shelter to survive. Also like humans, dogs need physical care and nurturing in order to thrive. Here's how to help keep your dog healthy, happy and safe while meeting the basic needs of all dogs.

Proper Nutrition

A healthy, balanced diet is fundamental. Research food companies that pledge to use high-quality ingredients instead of fillers. Then, choose a quality diet that your pet enjoys. Spending lots of money on a holistic, top-of-the-line diet is useless if Fido won't eat it. Many companies provide samples you can try without buying a whole bag. Others offer a money-back guarantee if your dog does not like the food. If you choose to provide a homemade diet, discuss the ingredients with your veterinarian first to be sure they are right for your dog. Then, make small batches until you are sure your dog actually likes it.

Once you have found an appetizing diet, watch how your dog responds over the first several weeks. A drop in energy level or a dull hair coat may warrant a diet change. If you do change your pet's food, always do so gradually to avoid gastrointestinal upset or food aversion. Consult your veterinarian for nutritional advice, especially if you notice any changes in your pet's health. Always be sure your dog has access to plenty of fresh, clean water.

Home - More Than Just Shelter

You need to provide proper shelter outdoors, especially during very hot or cold weather, as this can result in severe health consequences if your dog does not have access to an area where they can get out of the elements. Dogs are pack animals - they are not content when excluded from the family unit. Though some circumstances may require dogs to live outside, most dogs will thrive in a primarily indoor environment.

Your dog should have an area of the house dedicated as his own space, such as a kennel, crate or bed. This teaches your dog to have respect for his own space and, in turn, yours. Set down ground rules, enforce off-limit areas of the house, and welcome your dog into permissible areas. If your dog spends time outdoors, provide access to a doggie door or a temperature-controlled doghouse. Never leave your dog unattended outside without shelter

Physical Maintenance

Keep your dog healthy with regular exercise and preventive veterinary care. Establish an exercise routine, even if it is just a stroll around the block each morning. Depending on your dog's breed, more exercise may be necessary, but don't overdo it. Visit your veterinarian at least once or twice a year for a wellness check-up. Potential problems are often identified before your dog actually shows signs of illness. Every dog needs basic grooming, such as bathing and nail trimming. Some dogs even need regular haircuts. Find a reputable groomer, or learn to groom your dog at home. Then, establish a grooming regimen and stick with it.

Nurturing Your Dog

Dogs thrive on structure and discipline, and training is paramount to your dog's quality of life. Choose a training program and follow through. You may prefer to join a training class with a professional instructor. Alternatively, you may wish to learn about dog training on your own. Either way, establish yourself as the boss, reinforce good behavior, and humanely correct misbehavior. Be consistent and you will see positive results.

Maintaining the human-canine bond is vital. Set aside time for you and your dog. Petting your dog, playing with toys, talking to him, or taking him for rides in the car are some ways to strengthen and preserve this bond.

Following the guidelines for your dog's basic needs sets the foundation for a long, happy life with your dog. Dog ownership should not be a chore, but an experience that enriches your life and that of your dog. If you can keep that tail wagging, you will be happier, too.