Caring for a Puppy or Dog

Taking care of a dog or puppy is a big job! Find out what supplies you will need and what responsibilities you will have to take care of your new best friend.

Supplies Needed
• Premium quality dog food and treats for the right breed and size
• Food and water bowls – ceramic and metal bowls clean up better
• Safe toys – make sure there’s no lead paint or breakable parts
• Dog brush and comb
• Dog shampoo
• Pooper scooper and biodegradable poop bags
• Collar with license and ID tag
• Leash
• Dog nail clippers
• Carrier or crate
• Dog bed
• Dog toothbrush and dog toothpaste

What to Feed Your Puppy or Dog
• Adult dogs should eat premium-quality dry food. If you want, you can mix the dry food with water, low-salt broth or canned food
• Dogs can eat MOST fruits and vegetables, but never more than 10% of their daily diet. See below for a list of foods that shouldn’t be given to dogs.
• Puppies need a high-quality puppy food
• Avoid “people food” for all dogs and puppies
• Dogs and puppies need clean, fresh water available at all times

Dangers! Never Give Your Puppy or Dog
• Anything harder than your pet’s teeth. This includes cow bones, nylon bones and real bones. These can break a dog’s teeth.
• House plants
• T-shirts or knotted socks. If accidentally chewed apart and ingested, they can become “foreign bodies”, causing your pet to become very ill.
• Medicines unless it’s recommended by a veterinarian
• Alcohol
• Chocolate
• Coffee
• Grapes and raisins
• Moldy or spoiled food
• Onions, garlic or chives
• Poultry bones
• Salty foods or salt
• Tomato leaves or stems
• Unripe fruit
• Nuts

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**Exercise**
- Different dogs need different amounts of exercise. Some dogs need a lot. Some dogs get hurt if they exercise too much. Ask your veterinarian what’s best for your pet.
- When walking your pet, be careful of ice or snow, deicer salt, or hot pavement

**Daily Chores**
- Gently brush your dog’s fur
- Play with your dog
- Walk your dog – ask your veterinarian how long and how much
- Brush your dog’s teeth – chew toys aren’t enough
- Clean up poop
- Clean water and food bowls
- Feed and water your pet

**Monthly**
- Bathe your dog if needed. Some dogs don’t need to be bathed monthly.
- Have your parents or guardian:
  - Check your dog’s nails to see if they need to be clipped
  - Give your dog a heartworm pill from your veterinarian - no matter which state you live in!
  - Ask your veterinarian to see if your dog needs his/her ear hair trimmed or if he/she needs his/her "anal glands expressed"
  - Apply a flea/tick prevention treatment

**Be Gentle**
- Never hit a dog, they don’t understand what hitting is
- Never grab your dog’s fur or tail
- Don’t force a tired dog to play

**Get a License and ID**
- Follow your city’s licensing laws
- Attach the license to your dog’s collar
- Microchip your dog

**Spay and Neuter**
- To prevent health problems, females should be spayed and males should be neutered. Check with your veterinarian on the appropriate age to spay or neuter your pet.
- Dogs that are spayed/neutered don’t run away or fight as much

**Yearly**
- Have your parent or guardian take your dog to your veterinarian for a check-up every year

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