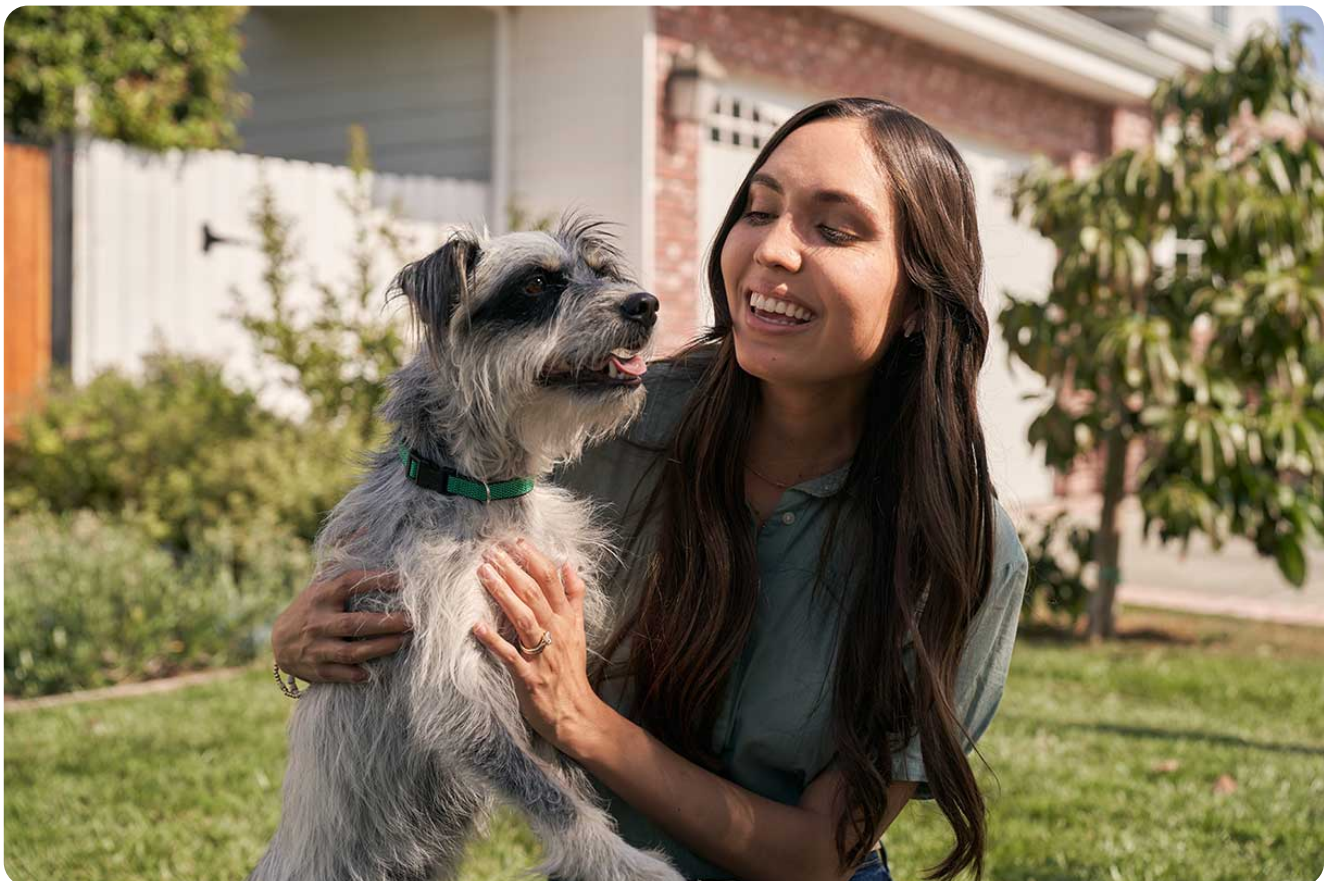


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Costs of Owning a Dog

The costs of daily care and maintaining good health can really add up. Here's how much you can expect to spend over the course of your pooch's lifetime.

Posted November 15, 2021



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Initial Investment When Buying a Dog

While it's not too out of the ordinary for a dog or puppy to show up in your life free of charge, it's more likely you'll need to spend money to acquire one. Even a "free" dog will have startup costs involved for pet owners, like providing necessary supplies and healthcare. Here's what getting a new dog or puppy can cost you.

How Much Does it Cost to Buy a Dog?

Purchasing from a reputable breeder: \$500 - \$2,000¹ depending on **which breed you choose**. Some rare breeds can cost significantly more, and you can also expect to pay more for puppies from championship lines. These fees usually include health screenings and the first round of puppy vaccinations. Backyard and hobby breeders may charge less, but they often don't conduct rigorous health screenings like professional breeders do, and they may source their dogs from puppy mills. It's best to avoid these "bargain" breeders, who may end up costing you more in veterinary costs and heartache in the long run.

Adopting from a shelter or rescue: \$0 - \$350.² Some shelters run special adoption events during which they either wave adoption fees or offer steep discounts, and fees can vary from shelter to shelter. Adoption fees typically cover the cost of spaying or neutering, vaccinations, parasite control and other medical expenses from the vets office — costs you would otherwise incur down the line.

Dog Supplies Cost

Your new pup will need some basic necessities to help them feel at home and keep them corralled while they learn the rules and where to potty. The cost of many of

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Initial Dog Health Costs for First Year

Dog Vaccinations and exams: \$50 - \$300¹

Dog Spaying/neutering: \$20 - \$300⁷; if adopting, this may be covered by the adoption fee.

Ongoing Maintenance

Dog Food Costs

The cost of feeding your dog each month is highly subjective. Not only will it change based on the size and life stage of your pooch, but it will also be impacted by the type and brand of food you buy, how much you feed your dog, and even where you shop. One estimate puts the annual cost of dog food and treats between \$250 and \$750 per year.⁶

Here's a breakdown of what you might expect to spend each month feeding a medium-sized dog:

Dry food: \$15 - \$60⁸

Canned food: \$35 - \$100⁹

Treats: \$5 - \$35¹⁰

Dog Grooming & Maintenance Costs

Grooming needs depend primarily on your dog's coat. Short-coated breeds usually

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any teeth extracted. Expect to pay between \$300 and \$800¹ for a basic cleaning. If an extraction or other type of dental surgery is required, that price tag could range from \$800 to \$3,000.¹

Dog Training Costs

Training is another highly subjective category. The costs depend largely on your dog's temperament and trainability. Some dogs only need basic obedience lessons, while others need a lot of work to learn how to be good citizens and housemates. If you have the time, energy and patience, and your dog is both good-natured and a quick learner, you can save money by **training them yourself** with the aid of books, videos or online training courses. Library books and YouTube videos are free, while online courses can run between \$15 a month and \$130 and up for a year's subscription.¹¹

Otherwise, you may need help from a professional trainer. For dogs who are especially difficult to train, or who have extreme behavioral problems, board and train programs may be an option to consider. These programs are basically like sending your dog away to boarding school for a period of time, and they can carry a hefty price tag. Here's what you can expect to spend on professional obedience training¹²:

Professional training: \$30 - \$100 per session

Group classes: \$40 - \$125 per class

Board and train: \$950 - \$2,000

Dog Boarding & Pet Sitting Costs

As much as you might like to, you can't always take your dog with you. While some

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token fee. Otherwise, a professional pet sitter will likely run you between \$250 and \$375 per week.¹⁴ If your dog will do okay without all the comforts of home, you can leave them with a pet hotel or boarding kennel for \$15 to \$50 a day.¹⁴

Traveling With your Dog

Of course, the best trips are the ones where Rover can tag along. Whether you're traveling for fun or moving long distance with your dog, here are the fees and extra charges you may get hit with:

Hotel fees: \$20 - \$100 per night¹⁵

Airline fees - in-cabin: \$50 to \$250 per one-way trip, plus baggage fees¹⁶

Airline fees - cargo hold: \$200 - \$400 and up per one-way trip¹⁶

Whether you travel by car or by plane, your pup will need a sturdy crate or carrier to travel in, which will run anywhere from \$30 to \$250 and up for an airline-approved carrier¹⁵ depending on the size of your dog. And your dog will also need to have proof of vaccinations and a certificate of good health to enter a foreign country, as well as some domestic locations, which your vet can provide for the price of an office visit.¹⁵ Microchipping your pup is also a good idea, in case they get lost far from home.¹⁷

Your Dogs Health

Veterinary and health costs are probably the biggest expense when it comes to keeping a dog. Routine health costs like **annual vet checkups**, parasite prevention, licensing and vaccinations, dietary supplements and medications tend to add up quickly. Also, emergency visits to the animal hospital may increase costs as well.

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Unfortunately, life happens to even the best of dogs. Illnesses, injuries and predisposed breed health conditions can all take you by surprise, so it's a good idea to budget for emergency care or have a plan for **veterinary financing**. An **emergency vet visit** can run \$800 - \$1500 or more,¹⁹ while major surgeries can run hundreds or thousands of dollars. A common **pet surgery** like ACL repair, for example, can cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000.²⁰ Diagnosis and treatment of illnesses can run anywhere from \$400 to \$4,000 and up.¹⁸

Pet insurance can help defray the cost of both routine and emergency health care. Different policies are available that cover different types and ranges of care. Depending on the coverage you choose, monthly premiums on pet insurance policies typically run from \$9 to \$58 per month,²¹ a relatively small investment that could lead to big savings over the lifetime of your pup.

Miscellaneous Dog Costs

If you're a renter, don't forget to factor in the cost of pet deposits or fees, which usually run between \$200 and \$500.²² This is a one-time cost, unless you move, and deposits are refundable, whereas fees are not. Some landlords also charge a monthly "pet rent" to further cover the cost of pet damage, usually an additional \$25 to \$100²² tacked onto your regular rent.

Homeowners may also find themselves with extra expenses, such as fence installation or repairs to an existing fence to provide your pooch a safe space to run and play. Don't be surprised if you also have to replace damaged carpets or furniture at some point.

You should also consider the cost of replacing things like dog beds, collars, and toys as these items undergo a lot of wear and tear. If your pup's a heavy chewer,

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arthritis and dementia, as well as terminal illnesses like cancer or heart disease may require palliative care, which focuses on keeping your pet as comfortable and pain-free as possible during the remainder of their life, and eventually pet hospice care, which involves easing their final days as much as you can. The cost of this can vary widely, depending on the type and amount of care your pet needs.

If you have the time and ability, you can provide these types of care at home under the supervision of your vet, who can provide pain and other necessary medications and also equip and train you to administer things like IV fluids and oxygen. Depending on where you live, some veterinarians and pet hospice clinics provide veterinary house calls to prevent the stress of bringing your pup to the vet for checkups. Of course, the more hands-on service your vet provides, the higher the cost.

Euthanasia is a difficult choice, and isn't always needed. Some dogs pass away peacefully and naturally. Sometimes, though, the kindest thing is to ease their passing with the aid of a vet. If you take your dog to a clinic, the cost to euthanize a dog starts at \$25.²³ If you prefer to have your pet pass in the comfort of your home, surrounded by their family, in-home euthanasia services cost up to \$225.²³

The final disposition of your pet is another cost you might incur. You may be able to save on this cost with a back yard burial. Otherwise, you can expect to pay between \$100 and \$150 for cremation services.²³ If you prefer to have your pet interred at a pet cemetery, a burial plot can cost up to \$500, depending on the size of the grave.²⁴

Ultimately, a new puppy pal will cost around \$400 in their first year with you and \$300 for each following year. But the cost of unconditional love, a wagging tail, and wet-nose kisses? Priceless.

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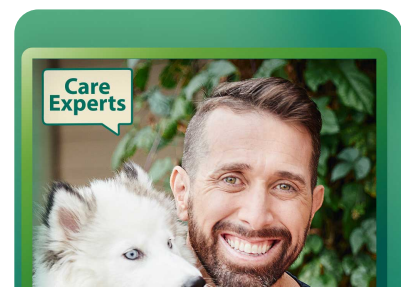
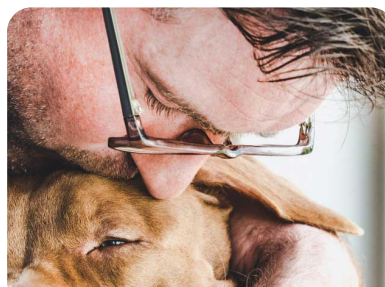
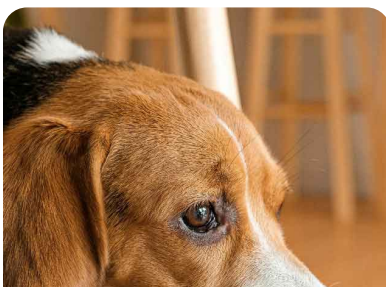
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