

The Ultimate Beginner's Guide to Pet Care: Tips for New Pet Parents

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Here's your current situation: You've finally fulfilled your long-awaited dream of adopting a dog or cat, but now tons of pet care questions are on your mind. How to take care of your pet? What should you feed your pet? How often do they need a bath? Should you neuter them? How can you build a lasting bond with them? You want to ensure your lovely furry friend enjoys the best possible well-being all their life.

So, let's simplify things for you—your four-legged companions are pretty simple beings who don't need much to be healthy and happy: delicious food, clean water, a comfy bed, fun playtime, and, most importantly, your company!

Your pets will reward you with the title of the 'best pet parents in the world' if you diligently follow the below-mentioned pet care tips.

Food and hydration tips

Every pet's nutritional needs vary depending on their breed, age, size, level of everyday activity, and overall health status. It is a good idea to ask your trusted veterinarian about the best diet that would suit your pet. As a general rule of thumb, you must treat them to a

well-balanced diet once or twice a day comprising kibble, cooked or raw meat, fish, and vegetables.

While you learn the do's of the pet care diet, you must be aware of the don'ts as well:

- Refrain from overfeeding your pet as it can cause obesity, which can heighten the risk of potential health problems such as arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, skin issues, decreased immune function, and digestive disorders.
- Keep your pet away from certain human foods such as chocolate, onions, garlic, citrus fruits, raw dough, fatty foods, salty foods, and more.
- Remember to wash your pet's food and water bowls to prevent bacteria from thriving.

Another pet care tip to note is that your pet should have ready access to fresh water throughout the day.

Grooming tips

Just like you need a grooming routine to enhance your health, hygiene, and beauty, your pets need one too! Your pet's grooming routine should comprise the following:

- **Coat and skin care:** Bathe your pet at least once every month or as directed by your vet to keep them free from dirt, allergens, ticks, and odour. Remember to brush their coats to ensure their fur is soft, shiny, and tangle-free!
- **Eye care:** At-home eye exams are a must! Your pet's eyeballs should be white, eyelids should be pink, and there should not be any eye discharge.
- **Dental care:** You can keep dental problems at bay by brushing your dog or cat's teeth daily and allowing them to play with the proper chew toys.
- **Nail care:** Trimming your pet's nails once they grow long should be a part of the pet care routine.
- **Paw care:** Check your pet's paws for cracks, wounds, redness, and other signs of concern and report it to your vet for a proper care plan.

If you need help with pet grooming, do not hesitate to book an appointment at a pet care centre near you!

Pet care bedding tips

While having your pet get cosy in your bed sounds fantastic, it cannot be a permanent scenario. As territorial animals, dogs and cats require a designated private space they can consider their own. The size and weight of your pet will determine how big the bed should be. Secondly, consider their unique needs when deciding the material of the bed. Does your pet have a habit of chewing everything? Then, chew-resistant beds should be your priority. Are they dealing with health concerns like joint pain? Orthopaedic and memory foam mattresses will benefit them. Most importantly, look for a bed that's easy to clean, maintain, and carry on your travels!

Preventative healthcare tips

It's advisable to schedule wellness check-ups at a pet care centre near you once or twice a year to safeguard your pet's health. These pet care visits will involve comprehensive physical exams, diagnostic testing, immunizations, and dietary and exercise recommendations. Additionally, it would be best to talk to your vet about the benefits of spaying or neutering your pet.

Mental well-being and bonding tips

Your fur babies can feel the blues, throw tantrums, and be on the edge. The solution to keeping them happy and building a lasting bond with them is to engage them in activities they enjoy, including:

- **Exercise:** Regular physical activity like walking, running, climbing stairs, swimming, fetching, and tug of war can keep your pet engaged and active.
- **Interactive toys:** Pets love a fun challenge, and engaging toys like treat balls and puzzle feeders can provide just that experience!
- **Training:** Teaching your pet to bow, give a high five, handshake, or perform other tricks and commands, along with positive reinforcement, contributes to mental stimulation.
- **Routine:** Establishing a pet care routine for feeding, grooming, playtime, and sleep can help your pet stay physically and mentally healthy and happy.
- **Petting and cuddling:** Physical touch is a type of love language for pets. Dogs appreciate a good scratch on their back, chest, shoulders, and base of the neck. For cats, the pleasure spots include the back, under the chin, and around the ears. You can also hug, cuddle, and kiss your pets if they don't mind it.
- **Alone time:** When your furry friend needs space, respect that!

Travelling tips

If you are confident that your pet can accept new places, people, and experiences, taking them on trips with you can be exciting. To ensure their safety and happiness during the journey, follow these tips:

- Consult the vet to ensure your pet is entirely fit for travel.
- Choose a pet-friendly destination, accommodation, and transportation.
- Carry your dog in a crate or carrier.
- Pack all pet care supplies beforehand, including pet food, treats, water, leash, bedding, toys, waste bags, medications, first aid kit, and pet identity tags.
- Remember not to leave your pet in a parked car when travelling by road, as it can cause a heat stroke.
- Note down pet care centres near you in the vicinity of your travel destination.

Pet care, your way

We hope you have your answer for 'how to take care of your pet?'. While these pet care tips are a great guide to get you started in pet parenting, remember to remain flexible and adjust as you discover your pet's unique requirements. After all, no one understands your best friend better than you do!