

Dog Supply Outline

Yes, you can have a dog *and* a budget!

Must Haves

- Water and Food Bowls
 - If you have a fast eater, you might want to invest in a “slow feeder bowl.” Otherwise, any food-grade bowl will work great!
 - **Budget Tip:** Bowls are easy to find at thrift stores. Dishes made for people work just as well to feed your pets. You can get two bowls for less than a dollar in a lot of second-hand stores.
- Kennel
 - Solid metal kennels for daily at-home use are best because they are less destructible than their plastic, cloth, or wooden counterparts. Metal will stand the test of time.
 - Kennels should fit your dog’s size. Dogs prefer a den-like environment, so make sure your dog has enough room to turn around and lay down but not so much extra room that it overwhelms them.
 - **Budget Tip:** If you have a puppy that will grow into a large breed, get a bigger kennel that has a moveable kennel divider. You can manually make the kennel shorter while the dog is smaller, so they feel more comfortable.
 - **Budget Tip:** For a kennel cover (to make the den-like environment), you can just use an old blanket or tablecloth. If you want to add softness inside the kennel, old towels and t-shirts are a great/affordable place to start.
- Leash
 - Try out a few leashes to see what feels comfortable in your hands and isn’t too thin or flimsy for your dog. Nylon is a cheap option but is slick and can easily slip out of your hands or hurt them if your dog pulls. Leather and braided leashes are better options that will last longer.
 - **Budget Tip:** Check clearance sections of pet stores. Especially after holidays, stores have to sell their holiday themed items—including leashes—at a discounted rate.
- Secure Collar
 - Avoid collars that snap together with a plastic piece. Those collars are easy to break and are a good way to lose a dog. A better option for daily walks is a buckle collar or a martingale collar. A harness is unnecessary and will actually encourage your dog to pull on the leash.
 - A pinch collar is a great addition to your toolkit for training purposes. Although I recommend it in Hellbent on Training video lessons, it is *not* needed to get started on your training journey, and I demonstrate other techniques to achieve ideal results if your budget does not account for a pinch collar right away.

- **Budget Tip:** Just like leashes, pet stores will try to clear out their seasonal merchandise after a holiday on a big sale!
- **Dog Food**
 - Consult with your vet to see what food would be best for your dog's health. Every dog is different, and a professional that is aware of your dog's medical history would be most able to assess the ideal food for their specific needs.
 - **Budget Tip:** Raw food and refrigerated food options can provide a lot of nutritional benefits, but they also come with a big price tag. There are lots of dogs that live long, happy, and healthy lives eating a solid kibble food for much cheaper. Be sure to let your vet know that you are looking for quality *and* affordable dry food options when asking for recommendations.
 - **Budget Tip:** Additionally, be sure to follow proper feeding amounts for your dog's build to help their health and your wallet! An overfed dog will turn into a sick dog with a lot of excruciating health issues in the future from the strain of bearing excess weight (i.e. major joint and heart problems). Check the package of your dog food for feeding guides based on weight.
- **Toys**
 - Dogs need at least one toy to encourage exercise and play, but they do not have to have the whole toy aisle from the store! Take your dog to a pet store and see what kind of toys they gravitate towards to get a better idea of what you could invest in for your specific dog. Small dogs tend to enjoy little squeaky toys that can fit in their mouths or softer toys that aren't hard for them to carry. Retrievers tend to love any type of ball for fetch. Medium and large breeds with a stronger bite might benefit from toys that are harder to destroy with a rubberier texture.
 - **Budget Tip:** You can make a lot of different types of toys yourself for free. An old tube sock with an empty water bottle in the middle and the open end sewn or tied closed is a great toy that offers a satisfying crinkle when the dog bites down. If you have a clean old dish rag or jeans that don't fit, you can cut cloths into thick strips and braid or knot them together to create your own rope toy to play tug with dogs that like to pull. A used tennis ball, baseball, soccer ball, etc. from the thrift store is a great way to find a cheap toy for dogs that prefer to chase, herd, and fetch.
- **Dental Hygiene Tools**
 - A key component to a dog's health is their dental wellness. It is important to clean your dog's teeth often. Just like human teeth, abrasion helps to remove tartar, so you should still be brushing their teeth with a dog-safe toothpaste and toothbrush or finger brush. If your dog already has bad teeth, they might benefit from dental hygiene additions to their water or food or a gel to put on their gums. Consult with your vet to see what would work best for your dog's teeth.
 - **Budget Tip:** You don't have to do anything too fancy (unless instructed by your vet) to maintain your dog's teeth. A simple, cheap toothbrush and a small bottle of dog-safe toothpaste will last a long time and yield great results down the line for their health.

- Brush
 - Every dog will need to be brushed, but the type of brush and how long the process takes depends on your dog's coat's texture. If your dog has long fur, it will need to be brushed with a regular brush daily to avoid tangles (i.e. Collies, Shih Tzu). If your dog has curly fur, it will need to be brushed every day with a comb long enough to reach the root of their fur to separate the clumps; this is important as these dogs mat incredibly easily which is painful for them (i.e. Bichon Frise, Doodle-mixes). If your dog has a thick undercoat that sheds, it will need to be brushed often with a type of comb that removes that loose fur like an undercoat rake (i.e. Husky, Great Pyrenees). If your dog has a short, straight coat, it is still healthy to brush it to remove dandruff and reduce shedding, but is much quicker and easier than others (i.e. Rottweiler, Chihuahua (short-hair)).
 - **Budget Tip:** Most dogs can be sufficiently brushed with a regular brush (made for humans or dogs) and comb from a dollar store. If you do need something extra like an undercoat rake, you can usually get them cheaper if you purchase the off-brand version.
- Grooming Tools or Groomer
 - Just like brushing, a dog's grooming requirements will vary greatly from dog to dog. Areas that will need attention on dogs of almost any fur type would be their sanitary trim (rear parts), paw pad trim, toenail clippings, and sometimes around their eyes and ears. You do not want the inner ears and eyes to have long fur that can tangle and obstruct their function. Additionally, their bottoms need to be trimmed enough that the hair cannot catch fecal matter and cake it onto their fur. As far as the toenail trim, some dogs that run outside and on hard surfaces like gravel or pavement might not need a formal trim if they wear their nails down naturally.
 - **Budget Tip:** Sending your dog to a professional groomer is a great option for those who do not have the time or physical capability to groom their own dog, or they want their dog to also have an aesthetically beautiful look that is difficult to replicate without being a professional. If you are trying to save money, grooming your own dog at home can be an option. Animal-safe shampoo, a nail trimmer, clippers, and rounded scissors are one-time purchases that you would need at home if you were to groom your own dog unlike the recurring charge of a groomer. The biggest hurdle to most owners grooming their own dogs at home is lack of compliance. You will be able to save money, but you will also need to dedicate a lot of time to conditioning your dog to the tools by treats and positive associations before you dive right into grooming your dog.
- Veterinarian
 - Choose a vet in your area that you can trust! Ask your friends for recommendations, look at online reviews, or work with a vet you have used in the past with another pet. Especially before your first appointment, take your dog to the vet's office when you are *not* being seen and let it be a relaxed visit. Bring lots of treats and walk around the outside of the building while rewarding when your dog appears relaxed to give them a positive association with the vet. *If it is not too busy*, head into the lobby and see if the receptionist can give your dog some treats. Usually, if you let them know this is a happy

visit just for your dog to have a good experience with the vet office, they are eager to make your dog feel comfortable.

- **Budget Tip:** A good vet focused on preventative measures will save you hundreds or thousands of dollars in medical bills down the road, so don't cut corners on the actual vet's prices if you like them. If your vet suggests something beyond your budget, don't be afraid to ask if there are alternative solutions that might be more affordable.
- Flea and Tick Control
 - There is no such thing as a completely inside dog. They all need exercise and potty time outside, so they all need flea and tick control. Fortunately, there are lots of different options. There are collars they can wear that last around 8-10 months, shots that can be given at the vet, or topical solutions that are applied every month.
 - **Budget Tip:** Ask your vet to recommend the most effective product at the most affordable price. Many times, you can get a better deal buying online in bulk or as an auto-shipping product on a schedule from an online retailer.
- Heartworm Prevention
 - Heartworms are a huge potential danger to dogs, and you want to prevent them. They are heartbreaking and expensive to treat and can still turn fatal despite best efforts. The best way to not get heartworms is to give your heartworm treatment at the same time each month without skipping.
 - **Budget Tip:** Ask your vet to recommend the most effective product at the most affordable price. Many times, you can get a better deal buying online in bulk or as an auto-shipping product on a schedule from an online retailer.
- Treats
 - Treats should be a special reward for dogs, not something they get just for looking cute. They should really only be used at certain times: when training and when trying to build a positive association with something (i.e. bathtub or kennel). If treats are saved for these specific occasions, they will increase in value to your dog because they are rare, and they will not pose a health threat by throwing off your dog's nutritional balance from being overused.
 - Different dogs like different types of treats, but usually the more fragrant the better (salmon, peanut butter, and liver are some common treat flavors that *most* dogs go crazy over). Be sure you are aware of foods that are toxic to dogs if you are planning to use human food as a treat.
 - Treats should be small rewards. Cut down treats until they are approximately the size of your pinky nail. Remember, they are little tastes of a reward, not a whole meal!
 - **Budget Tip:** Since treats are given in such small and moderated quantities, it is ok to use "unhealthy" choices. Dogs will just be getting a tiny taste and making your own treats can be a much cheaper alternative to buying pre-made and pre-packaged treats. Finely chopped hotdogs and chicken (cooked and without seasoning) are terrific options that a lot of dogs love.
- Potty Bags

- Don't be that dog owner that leaves your dog's poop out for someone else to step in! Usually, it is good practice to have at least two potty bags with you (per dog) when you are on a walk or hike to dispose of your pup's waste.
- **Budget Tip:** Luckily, potty bags are very inexpensive, but purchasing in bulk can definitely save you even more money!

Recommendations

- Skip: Collars with a "snap" type closure
 - Why: These collars are prone to breaking or not clasping properly.
 - Instead: Collars with a metal buckle or martingale collars for daily use
- Skip: Nylon leashes and slip leads
 - Why: Nylon is a hard material to keep a good grip on when the dog is pulling. Slip leads (other than when used by vets or shelters for easy transportation) can pull harshly on a dog's throat and cause damage if used for an extended time.
 - Instead: Leather or braided leashes with a collar
- Skip: Kibble with lots of filler
 - Why: If the dry food is mostly filler, your dog could be missing out on key nutritional value for a balanced diet.
 - Instead: Dog foods with whole, natural ingredients (Consult with a vet for recommendations for your specific dog and budget)
- Skip: Retractable lead
 - Why: If the dog is running and hits the end of the retractable leash, it will pull right out of your hands and "chase" the dog. This not only terrifies the dog (imagine having a tape measure attached to your neck and then someone drops the other end!), but it makes them impossible to catch as they are now running from the hard end of the leash. It also is not a good tool to practice off leash skills like recall because the dog cannot drag the lead behind them.
 - Instead: Long line (15'-30') allows for more of an off-leash experience while maintaining physical control options
- Skip: Harness
 - Why: Harnesses encourage pulling on leash.
 - Instead: Collar
- Skip: Cloth, plastic, or wooden crates for at home use
 - Why: These materials are easier to destroy for dogs that like to chew or are escape artists.
 - Instead: Metal kennels
- Skip: Rawhide bones
 - Why: Rawhides are generally discouraged by veterinarians because they cause intestinal blockages, are not easily digested, and often choke dogs.
 - Instead: Beef knuckle bones or vet recommendation

- Skip: Unsecured front seat riding
 - Why: If you are involved in a car accident, it is very easy for the dog in the passenger seat to be injured by the airbag or thrown through the front windshield. Additionally, a contained dog cannot bolt out of the car as soon as you open the door when exiting the vehicle.
 - Instead: Collapsible/travel kennel, seat harness, or other containment in rear seats or back for safety
- Skip: Pet insurance*
 - Why: The typical dog will not incur high enough medical costs for the pet insurance to be beneficial. *However, it is your money, so if you feel safer with pet insurance, that is a financial decision up to you!
 - Instead: A normal adult dog in good health will likely only go to the vet during routine visits around 1-2 times annually. Pay as you go and speak to your vet about alternative treatments if something unexpected does come up that is too expensive.

