

PET CARE CHECKLIST



MyPetThrives
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DR. GARY RICHTER

PET CARE CHECKLIST

Daily

- ☐ Fresh Filtered Water (AM)
- ☐ Fresh Food (AM)
- ☐ Clean Litter Box (Cats)
- ☐ Brush Teeth
- ☐ Exercise & Playtime
- ☐ Training (Dogs)
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Fresh Filtered Water (PM)
- ☐ Fresh Food (PM)

As Needed:

- ☐ Brush Fur
- ☐ Trim Your Pet's Nails
- ☐ Give Your Pet a Bath
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Other: _____

Every 1-12 Months

- ☐ Flea Control (Monthly)
- ☐ Heartworm Prevention Medicine (Monthly for Dogs) depending on your area
- ☐ Body Check (Ears, Skin, Paws, Eyes & Weigh, if possible) (Monthly)
- ☐ Take Your Pet to Your Veterinarian for a Physical (Every 6-12 Months)
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Other: _____

PET CARE CHECKLIST

EXPLANATION

Print this handy checklist out to remind you to stay up-to-date with regular care for your pet.

We recommend having this page laminated, and posted on your wall (or refrigerator) where you'll see it often. That way, you can use a dry erase marker to make notes and keep track of what has been done when.

This is also helpful to share with your pet sitter.

Fresh Filtered Water

Make sure your pet has plenty of fresh filtered water every day, preferably twice a day. The longer the water sits out, the more oxygen it loses and the more opportunity it has for bacteria to grow. When you provide your pet with fresh filtered water every day, you help prevent serious problems from diarrhea to cancer. Fresh water can make a big difference in your pet's health.

Fresh Food

The most important step in promoting your pets' long term health and quality of life is making sure they have proper nutrition. Feed them high-quality foods which meet their nutritional needs through all stages of life. Consult your veterinarian to discuss which foods are most appropriate for your animals' constitution and circumstance.

Clean Litter Box (Cats)

Litter boxes should be scooped daily and disinfected regularly to ensure good cat hygiene. This not only encourages regular use but also protects your cats from infections and disease.

Brush Teeth

By age three, 80% of dogs and 70% of cats have some evidence of periodontal disease. Proper dental care can increase your pet's life by one to five years. Brush your pet's teeth with pet toothpaste on gauze or a small pet-sized toothbrush.



It's important to use a toothpaste made for specifically for pets because pets swallow it and human toothpaste is not meant to be swallowed. Avoid fluoridated products and pastes that list sugars or sugar substitutes as one of the top ingredients. The best pet toothpastes contain enzymes that dissolve material on the teeth, such as glucose oxidase and lactoperoxidase.

If brushing your pet's teeth is too challenging, another option is to try pet oral hygiene solutions that can be added to your pets' drinking water. You may also try giving your pet healthy dental treats that help remove tarter. Make sure that the treats you buy don't contain sugars or dyes.

Exercise & Playtime

Exercise is crucial for your pet to maintain their range of motion, muscle mass, and general health. If your pet has arthritis or some degree of joint pain, appropriate exercise will also decrease their level of pain.

Training (Dogs)

Since dogs are a separate species from people with their own unique needs and natural instincts, it's important to train them to live harmoniously in a human household, improving your life and hers.

Most behavior problems with dogs are actually normal canine activities that occur at the wrong time or place or are directed at the wrong thing in the context of living with humans. The key to preventing or treating these problems is to teach your dog to redirect her natural behaviors to outlets that are acceptable in your home.



Brush Fur

Brushing your pet not only removes dirt, grease and dead hair from her coat, but it helps to remove skin flakes and stimulates blood circulation, improving the overall condition of her skin. Routine brushing also helps distribute natural oils throughout your pet's entire coat, making your pet's fur look healthy and glossy. Depending on your specific pet, this might be part of your daily pet care routine or something your pet only needs once in a while.

Trim Your Pet's Nails

Have your dog or cat's nails trimmed regularly. Keeping their nails short improves their traction and decreases the chance of falling or getting their nails snagged in the carpet. Non-skid dog boots are also available to decrease falls on slick floor surfaces.

Give Your Pet a Bath

How often you bathe your pet will depend on her coat type and how well she keeps herself clean. If her coat is discolored, smelly or oily despite a thorough brushing, then it's time for a bath. Your pet may also need regular bathing to keep her coat and skin healthy if she is obese or arthritic and can't groom herself properly.



If your pet has the misfortune to be sprayed by a skunk, do your best to get her into a bath before the skunk spray dries.

We recommend keeping a “deskunking” product on hand if you have a pet that spends a lot of time outdoors.

If bathing your pet yourself seems too overwhelming, you can take your pet to your vet or to a professional groomer to be bathed.

Flea Control

What your pet needs in terms of flea control depends on several factors, like your geographic area and your pet's lifestyle.

In general, flea and tick prevention keeps your pet healthy. Your pet won't pick up tapeworms or have flea bites that cause itching misery and flea allergy dermatitis. In addition, you can help prevent diseases that fleas and ticks carry such as Lyme Disease, ehrlichia, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tick paralysis. Don't let your pet get bitten by fleas when modern medicine has provided wonderfully effective and safe flea products.

Heartworm Prevention Medicine (Dogs)

Heartworm disease is a serious risk for dogs that can cause lasting damage to your dog's heart, lungs, and arteries and can even be fatal.

Heartworms are easy to prevent, but difficult and costly (and hard on your dog) to cure. Since it isn't possible to protect your dog from ever getting a mosquito bite (which is how dogs get heartworms in the first place), the best solution is to give your dog monthly treatments of heartworm prevention medicine, if you live in a geographic area where heartworm is prevalent.

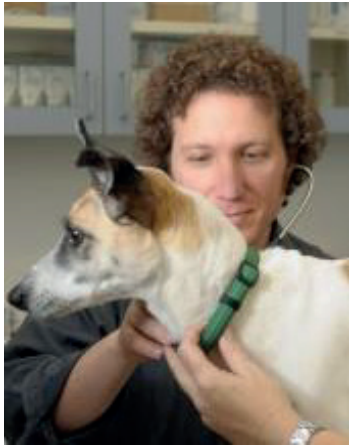
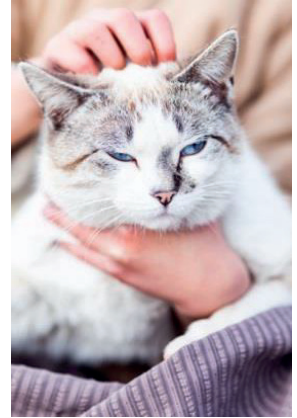
Cats can also get heartworm, but it's not as big a risk for them because cats are not natural hosts for the heartworm parasite. Since heartworm can still be fatal for cats, limit your cat's exposure to mosquitos and bring her in for preventative screenings during your regular vet visits.

Body Check (Ears, Skin, Paws, Eyes)

We recommend doing your own brief “nose to tail” physical examination of your pet once a month. Weigh your pet once, if possible. If you know what’s normal in your dog or cat, then you’ll be able to tell what’s not normal, and therefore be able to catch potential health problems early.

Take Your Pet to Your Veterinarian for a Physical

Take your pet to the veterinarian for a complete physical at least once a year or *twice-a-year for older animals*.



Routine checks can assist in catching problems at an early stage, when illness may be easier to treat. As Benjamin Franklin said, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

Discuss preventative health measures with your vet and adopt a proactive approach to your pet’s care.

Other

If your veterinarian recommends specific care for your pet (like regular bloodwork, for example), you can add these items to the “Other” categories.

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