

Is this the right pet for me?

Dogs and humans have a very special bond. But before you choose a dog, think about your lifestyle and how much time you have to spend with your canine friend. A dog needs company, training, veterinary care and regular exercise and will be part of your life for many years. If you decide that a dog is your ideal companion, think carefully about the various breeds and crossbreeds of dog, which can have marked differences in personalities as well as looks. Talk to other dog owners and breeders and find out about the temperament, activity level and special requirements of different types of dogs. Think Adoption First™ by considering adopting a homeless dog from your local animal welfare shelter.

Recommended for...

- People with time to spend with their canine Best Friend
- Singles, couples, families with children

Lifespan

10-14 years or more

Medications

- heartworm prevention
- intestinal worm treatment
- flea control

Feeding

If you want to change your dog's diet, wait until it has settled in and then introduce the new diet gradually over a period of four to five days. Feed a high quality dog food that is palatable, easy to eat and supplies complete and balanced nutrition. Follow the manufacturer's feeding guide on the packaging to work out how much to feed daily. Giving special dental chews, rawhides, dog chews or raw meaty bones on a regular basis will help keep your dog's teeth and gums healthy.

How much and how often you feed your dog will depend on its age, breed and activity levels, but one or two meals a day should be enough.

Try not to over feed your dog as this can lead to serious problems. Don't feed your dog chocolate or onions and avoid dairy products. Keep your dog's food and water bowls clean and separate from the family's dishes. Cool, fresh water should always be available.



NEW DOG CHECKLIST

Here's a list of the essentials you'll need for your new dog. Please ask any of the Best Friends team to help you with your selections.

Essential equipment

- a roomy kennel and warm, soft washable bedding for outdoors
- 2 unbreakable bowls for food and water
- a supply of your dog's current food
- a light collar and lead
- identification tag for name and phone number
- a dog brush & nail clippers
- dog shampoo
- car harness or travel cage
- a pooper scooper

Your dog will also love:

A great selection of toys to chew, fetch, hide, chase and catch.

Special Offer:



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Caring for your Dog





Preparing for a new dog

Before you bring your dog home, check that your home is free of hazards like toxic chemicals, compost, old bones or other small chewable objects, and your yard is dog-proof, with a secure fence and a closed gate.

Bringing your dog home

Choose a name before your dog arrives and use it while playing with, patting, feeding or grooming your dog. You may want to leave your dog indoors for the first night or two, but don't take too long to move its bed to the permanent sleeping place.

If your dog is to sleep outside, it will need a roomy, draught-proof kennel with warm bedding that's easily washed. Put the kennel in a sheltered spot, not too far from the back door, as dogs love to be part of the action.

Kids care

Never allow children to tease your dog or handle it roughly and remember, dogs and young children should always be supervised, especially when food is around. Remind children to always wash their hands after playing with the dog.

Grooming

Whether your dog has a long or short coat, regular grooming will help keep its coat clean and free of loose hair and provides an opportunity to spot any skin or health problems. Sharp nails can be trimmed with dog nail clippers. Ask OurVet™ team to show you how. If your dog has a long coat, regular grooming and trimming may be required. You may wish to have your dog expertly groomed at a professional salon, like our in-store Salon at Best Friends Pet SuperCentre.

Exercise

Going for walks, playing fetch and outdoor games are favourite activities for dogs. The amount of exercise your dog needs will vary depending on its age and breed, but most dogs need at least 20 minutes of outdoor play each day. Try to exercise your dog on the grass and not on hard surfaces. Over-exercising of large and giant breeds can increase their risk of developing joint problems later on, so a moderate amount of straight-line walking with minimal leaping, plunging and bounding is recommended to reduce the stress on their joints.

Identification

Microchip identification is compulsory for registration of dogs in Victoria. A tiny microchip is placed under the skin which works in a similar way to a bar code and allows your dog to be traced back to you should it become lost.

Obedience Training

A positive attitude to training is best. Your dog will try to please you once it understands what you want it to do. Dog obedience classes are designed to help you and your dog with training and socialisation. You'll learn a lot from these classes and so will your dog. Teach your dog firmly but kindly and you'll end up with a happy and well-behaved dog.

Travelling with your dog

It is important that your dog learns to travel safely in your car. A special car restraint harness can be used or in station wagons, a safety barrier between the passenger area and the rear luggage compartment is ideal for big dogs. Smaller dogs should be placed in a travel cage, which has plenty of newspaper in the bottom and a small water container attached to it. Never leave a dog in a closed, stationary car - even in cool weather as the interior of a car can become extremely hot!

If you are going on a long car trip with your dog, exercise it beforehand and have regular comfort stops. Pack food and water bowls, a leash, its usual food, together with a few of your dog's favourite toys.

Health

Regular health checks will help your dog to live a long and rewarding life. Whether your dog needs microchipping, a vaccination or anything else, you can go to the OurVet™ counter in store and talk to the Team. OurVet™ can also advise you about dental health, coat care, the amount of exercise your dog needs, or any other issues that concern you.

Your dog will have been vaccinated to protect it from potentially fatal diseases. Keep your dog's vaccination record in a safe place and note when the next vaccination is due.

Parasite Control: Dogs need to be wormed regularly to remove parasitic worms which live in the intestine and given regular heartworm prevention medication. Ask at the OurVet™ counter about the best worming and heartworm prevention products for your dog.

Fleas and ticks are common external parasites that cause skin irritation

and other more serious problems in dogs, especially during the warmer months. Usually a combination of products is required to control them. The OurVet™ team can give you specific advice on the most suitable approach for controlling external parasites on your dog.

Desexing: Dogs and bitches are generally healthier and more sociable pets if desexed.

Emergency Treatment: If your Dog develops diarrhoea which persists for more than 24 hours, or becomes severe, or has any other health problems, please contact the team at OurVet™ in store, or your nearest veterinarian.

Lost Dogs

Unfortunately some dogs do get lost. Make sure your dog always wears a collar with an identifying name and telephone number and a registration tag if required by your local government. If your dog is lost, contact your local pound, council, and veterinary clinics as lost or injured animals are often brought to these centres.

Responsible pet ownership

In most areas of Australia you are required by law to register your dog. In some cases there are restrictions on the number and types of pets you are allowed to keep. Check with your local government for further information on your rights and responsibilities both to your dog and to your neighbours.



Best Friends recommends the following premium dog foods for your Best Friend. Join our VIP Club and you'll receive 10% off!

