



The **realistic** cost of owning a small dog

If only their expenses were as tiny as they are. Here are some not-so-small ways to prepare your budget for your new dog.

Bringing a small dog into your home is no small task. After all, with great cuteness comes great responsibility. Recent research found that even a puppy from the local shelter could end up costing an estimated \$23,000 in its lifetime. Toys, food, vaccines, health care, and the dreaded household damage all add up to one pricey pooch.

On the plus side, many small dogs require less running room than their larger cousins, and they can make excellent companions—especially for those who do not have the physical space or strength to deal with a larger dog. Here are some of the expenses you might incur over your little companion's long, happy life.

Key concerns	Key costs
How much will it cost to spay or neuter my small dog?	Spaying or neutering your pet is important for population control and reducing health risks. <i>Spay/neuter costs for a routine procedure without complications:</i> \$50 to \$500
How do I know if my small dog is healthy and happy?	Regular exams help your veterinarian suggest care to prevent future health problems and identify disease early, when it may be easier to treat. <i>Routine medical costs per year:</i> \$200 to \$500* or more
Is my dog getting the right nutrition?	Talk to your veterinarian about what diet is best for your dog's breed, life stage, and lifestyle. <i>Annual food costs:</i> \$400 to \$600 or more
Is my dog getting enough attention and rewards?	The best treat you can offer your pet is your time and attention. Regular exercise and other activities recommended by your veterinarian will help keep your pet stimulated. Your veterinarian can also offer suggestions for toys to engage your pet. <i>Annual toy/treat costs:</i> \$50 or more
How do I keep my longhaired dog clean?	All dogs need grooming care, and longhaired dogs demand a bit more attention. <i>Annual grooming costs for longhaired dogs:</i> \$250 or more



And don't forget the cost of unexpected veterinary care, boarding for your dog, and extra pet accessories (leashes, collars, beds, and so on). **But before you panic, you should know that many clinics offer wellness plans and pet insurance to help keep the costs manageable. Talk to your veterinarian about your budget and don't forget to bring your favorite four-legged friend along for the ride.**

*Note: These numbers are estimates only, based on the costs of annual care. Your veterinarian may provide additional services in your pet's routine to keep your pet healthy, which may increase these expenses. Remember, your pet's veterinary needs are unique to your pet and depend on the injuries they incur or disease they develop. Individual pets may be at a higher risk for developing specific diseases based on breed, lifestyle, or conformation/body condition.