



# The **realistic** cost of owning a larger dog

When your dog is big and your veterinary bills are bigger, it's time to look at your budget and the true cost of veterinary care.

**A**re you about to welcome a medium- to large-sized dog into your home? Get your medium- to large-sized hug ready. You're in for a big treat. Just be prepared. Your canine companion will need special care to enjoy a long, happy life with you.

Usually medication and veterinary procedure costs, boarding expenses, and food costs are significantly higher than those for smaller dogs. Why? Because big dogs need more space in the kennel, more food in their bellies, and larger doses of medicine in their bodies.

*Estimates for the average lifetime expenses for a large dog weighing more than **40 pounds** and living up to **17 years** totaled around **\$17,822.***

A large portion of that will likely go toward veterinary care. Now before you freak out and vow only to buy goldfish, you should know that you have payment options.

*Talk to your veterinarian about the advantages of pet insurance and wellness plans—and keep your dog's tail wagging.*

Key concerns	Key costs
<b>How do I know if my dog is healthy and happy?</b>	It's impossible to tell if Scruffy is healthy just by looking at him. This is one reason regular exams are so important. <i>Routine veterinary visit costs per year: <b>\$300 to \$600 or more*</b></i>
<b>What if my dog needs surgery?</b>	Discuss the reason for the surgery, what to expect after the surgery, and any other concerns with your veterinarian. <i>Annual surgical veterinary visit costs: <b>Starting around \$600 or more, depending on the procedure, your pet's health, and other considerations</b></i>
<b>Is my dog getting the right nutrition?</b>	Talk to your veterinarian about what diet is best for your dog's breed, life stage, and lifestyle. <i>Annual food costs: <b>\$500 to \$600 or more</b></i>
<b>Is my dog getting enough exercise?</b>	Dogs need interactive play and daily walks. And you can add some fun to your play with veterinarian-approved balls, stuffed animals, and ropes; these are great ways to play with your pup inside or outside. <i>Annual dog toy costs: <b>Starting at \$50 or more, depending on your purchasing preferences</b></i>
<b>How do I keep my dog's coat shiny and clean?</b>	Regular trips to the groomer can help keep your dog's coat in top condition, and you can also offer your doggy home "spa" care too. Ask your veterinarian for advice on shampoos and bathing. <i>Annual grooming costs: <b>\$60 or more, depending on factors such as your dog's breed and coat</b></i>
<b>What if I need to go out of town?</b>	If Rex isn't invited on your trip, you'll have to book a room at his favorite hotel. <i>Boarding costs per year: <b>\$300 or more, depending on accommodations and length of stay</b></i>

\* 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.