

Toy and Small Breeds: Essential Care Items

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special considerations of toy & small breeds

Due to their manageable size, toy and small dog breeds are extremely popular with urban as well as elderly pet owners. Their size allows small dog breeds to adapt to a greater variety of situations. Because of their unique physiology, there are certain issues that need to be addressed to ensure a comfortable and healthy life for your small dog.

Proper Nutrition

Because of their size and activity level, small dogs require more calories per pound. However, due to their smaller stomach size, they do better when receiving at least two or more meals spread out throughout the course of the day. To ensure proper nutrition and caloric intake, consider an [automatic pet feeder](#) for easy and consistent portion control.

Provide a premium [high-protein dry food](#) as the staple diet. This food is nutritionally balanced and the hard texture also helps exercise the gums. Some small dogs may be finicky eaters, so adding small amounts of premium canned food to the dry food can provide extra flavor while still offering optimum nutrition. Depending on the age and health of your small dog, it may be necessary to fortify his diet with a [vitamin supplement](#).

Special Dental Considerations

Daily brushing and proper dental care save you many dollars in teeth cleanings. Small dogs are more prone to periodontal disease due to tooth size, their compact muzzle, and the arrangement of their teeth. Dental care can be simple with the right tools. Use chlorhexidine-containing products: [pre-moistened pads](#) permit brushless teeth cleaning. Or try smaller ergonomic [toothbrushes](#). They're easier to use for smaller mouths and help make dental care for small dogs gentle and less stressful.

Avoid sugary foods and treats. Give her occasional high-protein treats instead. Better yet, offer tasty [dental treats](#) designed to scrape plaque; it's an oral hygiene program your small dog will be more than happy to participate in.

High Energy Level

Many small dog breeds, especially when they are younger, are a bundle of energy

and require ample mental and physical stimulation. If appropriate outlets are not provided for these energetic pups, they become easily bored. Pent up energy may be expressed as inappropriate behavior such as aggressive chewing or excessive barking. To help prevent boredom and resulting stress-related behavior, offer a variety of toys, including [plush toys](#) and [interactive toys](#) to keep them occupied.

Life Indoors and Out

Kept primarily indoors, small dogs need a retreat area they can call their own. Create stress-free zones in your home - safe, secure and cozy areas where your small dog can relax and retreat when over-stimulated. [Calming products](#) that diffuse calming pheromones may also be used to provide additional stress relief.

Create a pet-safe section of your home using pet [gates](#) or use a [crate](#) to keep your small pet safe and out of trouble while you are away. [Absorbent housetraining pads](#) provide a designated area for indoor dogs to "go" while you are away at work.

Once you return from work, spend quality time with your pet to burn off pent up energy and to strengthen the human/animal bond. Better yet, go outside for a walk. Small dogs are great companions outdoors. Their petite size and the wide variety of [carriers, strollers and pouches](#) make traveling with them easier than ever. Be sure to dress your small dog appropriately. Due to their size, small breeds (especially shorthair breeds) lose heat quicker and are prone to chills. [Pet clothing](#) protects and keeps dogs warm during walks.

Long Term Care

Many small dog breeds are long-lived and therefore may manifest symptoms associated with age. [Aspirin](#), [Joint Care products](#), [elevated feeders](#), [heated pads and beds](#) help ease or minimize pain associated with arthritis.

Small dogs are full of personality and make wonderful companions. By properly addressing their needs, these adaptable dogs offer much more than what their diminutive size may suggest. Check out all of our toy breed items [here](#).



Advantages of Toy & Small Dog Breeds

Though the term "Toy" refers to a specific group of dogs designated by the American Kennel Club, it is commonly used to describe small dog breeds less than 20 pounds. Small breeds of dogs are found in every AKC Group sure to match any lifestyle as your ideal companion.

- manageable size
- easier grooming
- occupy less space - ideal for apartment living
- less costly food & care
- convenient travel companion