

Dog Bed Selection Guide

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

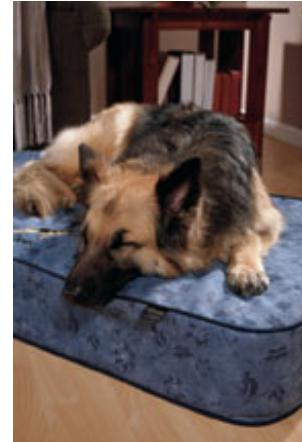
Our beds are developed by veterinarians who understand the physiology of your pet, and are manufactured in the U.S. to the highest standards. Selecting a bed from us best-suited to your dog's lifestyle is easy. Let the weight, strength, and activity level of your pet indicate the size and support needed. Let your dog's age and health, as well as your local climate, determine whether your dog needs a good all-purpose bed, or a specialty bed designed to heat, cool, or provide extra support.

All-purpose beds

When selecting an all-purpose bed your three main considerations should be style, size, and construction.

Style - To select the right style for your dog, first determine how your pet prefers to sleep. Stretched out? Curled? Snuggled-in? One of three styles should satisfy your dog's preference.

- **Mattresses** - If your pet prefers to stretch out, then a mattress bed in foam or high-loft polyfil is the proper choice. Mattress beds allow dogs to curl up, stretch out, or assume any position in between. These beds come in a variety of styles, from [basic pads or mats](#), to [miniature sofas](#) or [mattresses, some with built-in pillows](#). They can be [rectangular or round](#).
- **Nests and Bolsters** - If your dog likes to curl up, and wants the security provided by padded sides, get him an [oval nest](#) or a [bolster-style bed](#). These beds make great cold weather sleepers, since your pet will be well insulated and protected from drafts.
- **Balls** - If your pet likes to create his own space, and then snuggle in, an overstuffed [slumber ball](#) is the perfect choice. Balls can be ordered with soft berber covers. If your dog is a digger or scratcher, you'll appreciate the durable canvas cover options.



Size - Once you've considered which shape bed best matches up to your pet's favorite sleeping positions, determining bed size is simple. If you've decided on a mattress style, measure your pet while he is lying out, and then add twelve inches to determine bed length. If you're considering a nest or ball, measure your pet while in a curled up position, and then add seven inches to determine length. Because cramped beds are seldom cozy, you'll never go wrong by ordering the next larger size based on your measurements.

Construction - The type of filling will determine the comfort and support levels of the bed. The quality and construction of the cover will determine durability.

- **Polyfil beds** are stuffed much like a traditional cotton-filled pillow. They provide an excellent balance of comfort and support. If your dog often circles when he gets ready to sleep, as if he is arranging a "nest" for himself, you'll want to make sure the bed you choose for him will not flatten out excessively. You can find no better than one filled with our [exclusive MiracleLoft® polyfil](#), or a [polyfil/cedar stuffed bed](#) that will not "deflate" before your dog finishes with it. For better support, get a bed with baffled chambers to ensure that the polyfil stays in place under your pet, and does not shift to the outer edges of the bed.
- **Solid foam beds** are comfortable for all dogs, but are especially recommended for large breeds and older canines, which often develop calluses over their elbows or hocks. These problems can be prevented with the use of a foam bed like the [Traditional Slumber Nest](#). To choose the right foam bed, consider both firmness and density. Firmness determines comfort; density determines how much rebound the foam allows. Higher quality beds, like our [Super Deluxe Bed](#), have 7" of orthopedic foam with greater density and firmness to provide exceptional support.



- **Cover quality** - Once you have selected the right bed for your dog, look for these features:
 - Quality, washable materials are a must. A cover that can be unzipped and thrown into the wash with minimal hassle is a delight.
 - Fabric that is thick enough to withstand the roughest pads and toenails without puncturing will ensure that

- the bed will be long-lasting.
- Seams which are double-stitched. A "self-repairing" synthetic zipper will prevent your floor, or your dog, from inadvertent scratches.
- Stain resistance to make clean-up a snap.
- An inner, zippered liner, especially handy if you wish to refresh the filling.
- Combination cedar/polyfil for odor control.

Specialty beds

If you live in a particularly hot or cold climate, or if your pet is aging or ill, one of the following options may improve the quality of his life.

Orthopedic beds - If your pet develops joint problems such as hip dysplasia, is a particularly large breed, is overweight, or has arthritis, consider an Orthopedic Bed made of medical-grade orthopedic foam.

- [Quilted Super Deluxe Bed](#) - 5-1/2" of high-density orthopedic foam sandwiched between two 3/4" layers of MiracleLoft® polyfil for support with softness.
- [Deluxe Orthopedic Pad](#) - Dome-textured polyfoam on both sides, a full 4" thick, offers supreme support for your special pet.
- [Orthopedic Pad](#) - A single layer of thick, medical-grade foam to help relieve discomfort in sore joints and muscles.

Heated beds - With the change of seasons you probably throw an extra blanket on your bed, but what about your dog? Cold radiating from the floor or drafts can make your pet's otherwise comfortable bed a chilly place. Four good options include:

- [Thermo Bed](#) - Filled with soft, plush filling, this bed yields gentle, radiant heat 12 to 15 degrees above room temperature.
- [Deluxe Pet Bed Heater](#) - You can slip this heater into any bed with a removable cover or inner liner. Covered with soft foam and a faux lambswool removable sleeve, the heater warms to a natural 102 ° F when in use by your pet.
- [Lectro Kennel Bed Heating Pad](#) - Available in three sizes, this pad can be ordered with an optional temperature control gauge to regulate temperatures from 100 ° to 104 ° F.
- [Cozy Cushion](#) - This cushion warms without wires or batteries! Placed in cage, crate, or on the floor, the unique inner core reflects your dog's body heat back to him.



Cooling beds - Relief from the heat does not come easy if you are covered head to toe in fur at any age. As dogs age, their ability to regulate their body temperature decreases. This means they are less adaptable to temperature changes. Dogs who could handle cold temperatures when they were young may not be able to as they age.

- [Body Cooler Pet Mat](#) - This mat provides effective relief even in the hottest weather. It contains non-toxic copolymer crystals that, when soaked, absorb 400 times their weight in water. Airflow over the crystals activates a cooling effect that lasts for days.

A quality personal bed should be considered a must have for your pet. At every stage of your dog's life, you will find all of your best bed bets at Drs. Foster & Smith.

