

Dog First Aid Checklist

A dog-specific checklist to help owners respond to choking, bleeding, heatstroke, and paw injuries and know when to call the vet.

Be Prepared

- ☐ Save your vet and nearest emergency hospital numbers
 - ☐ Keep a pet poison helpline number handy
 - ☐ Stock and check a dog first aid kit
 - ☐ Learn your dog's normal breathing and gum color
 - ☐ Keep a leash, towel, and carrier accessible
- Program emergency numbers into your phone in advance

Choking

- ☐ Look for pawing at the mouth, gagging, or panic
 - ☐ Open the mouth and remove a visible object if safe
 - ☐ Avoid pushing an object deeper down the throat
 - ☐ Keep your dog as calm as you can
 - ☐ Get to emergency care if breathing is blocked
- Take care, as a panicked dog may bite

Bleeding & Wounds

- ☐ Apply firm, steady pressure with a clean cloth
 - ☐ Hold pressure rather than lifting to look
 - ☐ Cover the wound loosely once bleeding slows
 - ☐ Keep your dog calm and limit movement
 - ☐ Go to a vet for deep or heavy bleeding
- Heavy or spurting bleeding is an emergency, so go at once

Heatstroke

- ☐ Watch for heavy panting, drooling, or weakness
- ☐ Move your dog to shade or air conditioning
- ☐ Wet the coat with cool, not ice-cold, water
- ☐ Offer small sips of water if your dog is alert
- ☐ Get to a vet immediately, even if cooling helps

Paw & Leg Injuries

- ☐ Check pads for cuts, splinters, or burns
- ☐ Rinse a minor cut and apply gentle pressure if bleeding
- ☐ Avoid moving a leg that may be broken
- ☐ Limit walking and keep your dog still
- ☐ See a vet for limping, swelling, or deep wounds

Transport to the Vet

- ☐ Support the body and avoid twisting an injured area
- ☐ Use a board or blanket as a stretcher for a large dog
- ☐ Keep your dog warm and calm during the trip

- ☐ Call ahead so the clinic can prepare
- ☐ Bring any packaging, medicines, or samples

Important

- ☐ This checklist is general information for owners, not veterinary advice; first aid does not replace professional care, so always consult a licensed veterinarian
In any emergency, contact your vet or an emergency animal hospital immediately