Pet Checklist

A complete pet checklist covering everything a new owner needs to prepare for, supply, and care for a new pet.

Before you bring a pet home

- [ ] Research the species and breed to match energy, space, and time to your lifestyle.
- [ ] Confirm housing rules, pet deposits, or landlord approval if you rent.
- [ ] Budget for ongoing costs like food, vet visits, and emergencies.
- [ ] Agree on who handles feeding, walks, and cleanup in your household.
- [ ] Choose a veterinarian and note the nearest emergency clinic.
  Save both numbers in your phone before pickup day.
- [ ] Set a realistic arrival date when you can be home to help your pet settle.

Pet-proofing your home

- [ ] Secure or remove toxic plants, foods, and household chemicals.
- [ ] Tuck away electrical cords, small objects, and choking hazards.
- [ ] Block off unsafe rooms, stairs, or balconies as needed.
- [ ] Set up a quiet, defined space where your pet can rest undisturbed.
- [ ] Secure trash cans and store medications out of reach.
- [ ] Check fences, screens, and doors for gaps an animal could slip through.

Essential supplies

- [ ] Food and water bowls suited to your pet's size.
- [ ] Age- and species-appropriate food recommended for your pet.
- [ ] A comfortable bed and a safe carrier or crate for transport.
- [ ] Collar, harness, leash, or species-appropriate containment.
- [ ] Toys and enrichment to keep your pet stimulated.
- [ ] Grooming basics and cleanup supplies for accidents.

Identification and safety

- [ ] Fit a collar with an ID tag showing your phone number.
- [ ] Ask your veterinarian about microchipping and register your details.
- [ ] Take clear photos of your pet in case they ever go missing.
- [ ] Keep a recent record of weight, markings, and any medical notes.
- [ ] Note your pet's name, age, and habits for sitters or emergencies.
- [ ] Childproof or pet-gate areas to prevent escapes during the first days.

First vet visit and health

- [ ] Book a wellness exam within the first week home.
- [ ] Bring any paperwork, records, or a stool sample if requested.
- [ ] Discuss vaccinations and a schedule that fits your pet's age.

- [ ] Ask about parasite prevention for fleas, ticks, and worms.
- [ ] Talk through spay or neuter options and timing.
- [ ] Important: This is general information, not veterinary advice. Always consult a veterinarian about your pet's health, diet, and vaccination needs.

Building a daily routine

- [ ] Set consistent feeding times so your pet knows what to expect.
- [ ] Plan exercise, walks, or play suited to your pet's energy.
- [ ] Establish bathroom or litter habits with a predictable schedule.
- [ ] Add daily handling and bonding time to build trust.
- [ ] Keep grooming and cleanup on a simple regular rhythm.
- [ ] Watch eating, drinking, and behavior, and note any changes for the vet.