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How to Give Your Aging Pup the Best Life

When you bring your pup home for the first time, you want to ensure that he lives a long, healthy life. Once you have a senior dog, you start noticing little things that indicate he cannot perform the same tasks he used to. For instance, many aging dogs begin to slow down, to suffer from joint pain or arthritis. Some develop chronic illnesses that require medication. Knowing how to care for your dog in various life stages can help him live a happy, fulfilling life throughout his golden years. Read on for some insights from [FIDO Pet Food Bank](#).

Consider Your Pup's Changing Needs

Think about your dog's changing food needs. Some senior dogs require a more high-protein diet to keep weight on, whereas others may need a diet without fillers because of excess weight gain. Canine Journal notes that your dog's specific health issues are what you need to take into consideration [when changing his food](#). If you decide to change your pet's food, do so slowly to reduce the possibility of stomach upset. Replace about one-third of your dog's food first, then half, and finally replace it with the new food. Adjusting slowly not only helps picky dogs, but it helps dogs with sensitive stomachs.

The Farmer's Dog points out that older dogs require about [30 to 60 minutes](#) daily of physical exercise. Your dog's limits, however, are determined by his conditions. For instance, if your dog has joint problems, consider swimming as a low-impact activity.

Older pets may need special shampoo to meet their particular needs. As animals age, their skin gets thinner and more delicate, and their coat tends to become dryer and more brittle. The use of a special shampoo with natural oils can help combat this skin dryness, as well as provide protection for your pet's coat from dirt and allergens.

Have Regular Conversations With Your Vet

Like people, dogs develop different ailments as they age. Some [common conditions for older dogs](#) include:

- Arthritis
- Cognitive decline
- Urinary problems
- Vision and hearing loss

Visit your vet regularly to track your pet's changing health. If your dog requires a specific medication regimen, talk to your vet about [how to administer the drugs properly](#). When giving your dog medication, try to use positive distractions to keep him from focusing on the process. Some dogs hate medication, and you may have to become creative with playtime to integrate medicine into play so your dog associates it with positive things.

Keep Home Clean

As dogs age and become more susceptible to illnesses, they may have a harder time navigating around the house. Maintaining a clean environment is essential to minimize these risks. One effective way to ensure the safety of your aging pet is by using [natural DIY cleaners](#) that are safe around animals. For instance, a mixture of vinegar and baking soda can be an excellent cleaning solution that is pet-friendly and effective in eliminating dirt and odors. These natural cleaners reduce the risk of exposing your senior dog to harsh chemicals found in many commercial cleaning products. Keeping your home clean with such pet-safe methods not only helps in creating a healthier environment for your aging dog but also contributes to their overall well-being and comfort.

Invest in Pet Insurance

While having a pet is an immense source of joy and comfort, the associated costs can be quite prohibitive. When considering an aging pet, whose health needs may be considerable, the cost of medical care can begin to add up in a hurry. Pet insurance offers a practical solution for those looking for assistance with their pet's medical bills. It allows pet owners the freedom to seek out

treatments which may otherwise not become available due to the associated costs. It's also a good idea to check on age limits as some policies won't cover senior animals.

Try Changing Careers

As dogs age, they often require more attention, comfort, and frequent care, which can be challenging to provide if you're away at work all day. Approaching your boss about increasing your work-from-home days can be a great start. However, if you're considering a more significant career shift to accommodate your aging pet, [explore the options](#) in fields that are known for flexibility, such as the IT industry. Many IT jobs offer remote work possibilities, allowing you to be present for your pet while still pursuing your career. Moreover, you can enhance your qualifications by enrolling in accredited, all-online classes from universities. These online courses not only provide valuable skills and certifications but also ensure you have more time available to spend with your dog, ensuring they receive the love and care they need in their golden years.

Respect Your Need for Downtime

According to the experts, dogs know when you feel stressed and can begin to exhibit the same stressful signals. They mirror your emotions; if you bring stress into the home, you can be sure your dog will feel it. Take time for yourself regularly. Give yourself some time every day to focus on stress relief. Regular moderate-intensity physical [exercise helps boost your mood](#).

If you experience a lot of stress from work, consider working from home at least twice a week. Working from home gives you more time to spend with your aging pup. He may feel less anxious to have you there.

Additionally, those who work from home tend to have [less financial stress](#) than those who commute daily. Take advantage of working from home for you and your pup's stress level. If you cannot work from home, consider hiring a pet sitter to stop by now and then to check on him or engage in play. If your dog experiences separation anxiety, make sure when you do leave, you make it as uneventful as possible.

Taking care of an aging dog can be stressful. Make sure you take plenty of time for yourself during the process. Arrange a time for yourself to manage your stress and also have a strict regimen to follow with your dog so you can ensure he receives proper care throughout the week. Continue to have fun with your dog with respect to his limits.