

Cost of Owning a Cat

When you think about the annual cost of care for your cat, there are several things to consider. Cats can live an average of 10-18 years, although some cats may even live into their twenties. Below are general price ranges for the things your cat will need over the course of his/her life.

FOOD: Most cats are fine with a typical feline pet food that you can buy at specialty pet stores or even grocery stores. It is important to pay attention to the ingredient list on your cat's food because often times, you get what you pay for. If you purchase a higher quality food you may end up saving money because the diet is well-balanced and you are able to feed less of it. Whether you decide to keep your cat on a wet or dry food diet is up to you and your veterinarian, although cats benefit from being fed both wet and dry food.

On average, you can expect to pay around \$120-500 on cat food annually. If your cat requires a special prescription diet due to a chronic medical issue, your expense will be closer to \$500.

CAT LITTER & SUPPLIES: You will need to keep in mind that litter will need to be purchased on a monthly basis to encourage your kitty's good bathroom habits. Other supplies, at least initially, will include at least one litterbox. We recommend one litterbox plus one for every cat in the home. So, if you have one cat, we recommend two litterboxes. You'll also need a litter scoop.

Owners can expect to pay around \$100-250 annually depending on any additional supplies, the type of litter you wish to purchase, and how many additional cats are in the home.

MEDICAL NEEDS: Routine medical care is strongly recommended for your feline friend, which would include a yearly physical exam and vaccinations. If your cat goes outside, he/she will likely need additional vaccines or tests.

On average, you can expect to pay between \$65-150 for annual vaccines, routine testing, and examinations for your cat. For outdoor cats, this range can increase up to an additional \$350 for heartworm and flea/tick preventative(s), additional tests, and additional vaccines. Also keep in mind that cats who go outdoors have an increased risk of unforeseen illness or injury which can significantly increase annual costs.

While these are the main areas of expense for your precious pet, also keep in mind that your cat's mental health is equally important, so budgeting for extra treats, toys, comfortable beds, scratching posts, cat trees and other mentally stimulating items is very important. The cost of these items ranges considerably. There are also some one-time expense fees when first acquiring a pet that will cause you to spend more money the first year of pet ownership (i.e. carrier, bowls or dishes, etc.).

Before adopting, you should strongly consider your ability to adequately care for a cat and to give them the care that they need. Keep in mind that costs increase when you have multiple animals, so waiting until you have the financial resources to care for multiple pets is the best decision you can make not only for yourself, but for any potential cats you may be bringing into your household. These estimates do not take into consideration any health issues your cat may have over the course of their life.

Total Annual Costs for an INDOOR Cat: \$340-\$900

Total Annual Costs for an OUTDOOR Cat: \$475-\$1,250