

## Jason Carr, Former Pet Health Network Editor-in-Chief

Jason has over 8 years of experience in the pet health industry and was managing editor of IDEXX's Pet Health Network team.

*If you have a dog that you love, then we're sure you already feel awesome, and so does your dog. There are lots of ways to feel extra awesome as a pet parent, and we've gathered 5 that we think are bound to make you feel especially proud.*

### 1. Go green with your dog

Have you taken steps to reduce your own eco-footprint? Don't forget to include your dog in the process. Using biodegradable pet-poop bags, spaying or neutering your pet (to prevent overpopulation) and buying toys made from recycled material can all help you and your pet stay green. [Click here for more about "going green" with your dog.](#)

### 2. Build a first aid kit for your dog

You never know when your dog may need first aid. An easy-to-access kit offers great peace of mind and could prevent a disaster. [Click here to watch a video about building a first aid kit.](#)

### 3. Be your dog's advocate

Your dog counts on you to take charge of his healthcare. It is a good idea to keep a comprehensive record of your dog's medical history. This should include a record of any current illnesses and medications; previous illnesses; routine wellness veterinary visits, including preventive care testing (i.e. wellness blood work, heartworm and fecal testing) and procedures (i.e. dental cleaning), and vaccination history. Don't be afraid to ask your veterinarian to explain things in a way you can understand and request a specialist if you feel it's necessary. [Click here to read more about asking for a second opinion.](#)

### 4. Clean your dog's ears

This might sound obvious to some, but how often do you really clean your dog's ears? Because of the way ear canals are formed in dogs, it's very easy for debris to get stuck inside. [Watch this video to learn how to properly wash your dog's ears.](#)

### 5. Build a disaster preparedness kit

September is Disaster Preparedness Month. In the event that devastation ever strikes your town, the last thing you'll want to be doing is digging around for emergency dog supplies. Be prepared to evacuate and to take your dog with you. [Click here to watch a video about making a disaster preparedness kit.](#)

*If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian -- they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.*