

# Pets

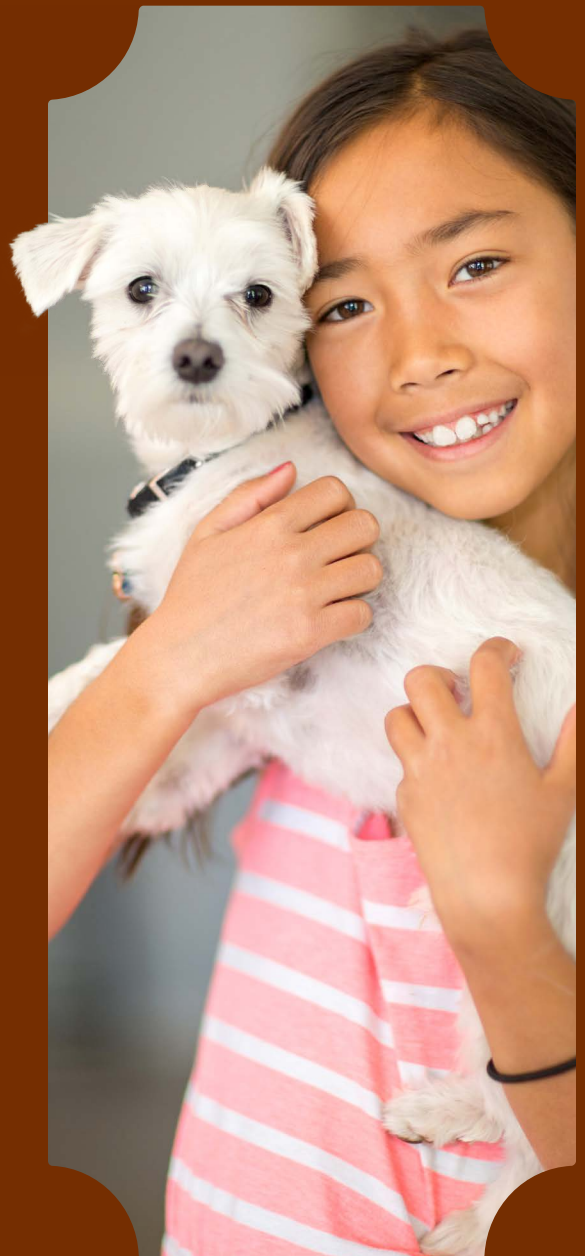
Whether they're cute and cuddly, or slimy and scaly, pets are so much fun. If you hope to have a pet someday, use this badge to learn how to choose the pet that's right for you—and make sure it stays happy and healthy. Or find out how to take the best care of a pet you already have!

## Steps

1. Find out what care different pets need
2. Keep a pet comfy
3. Help a pet stay healthy and safe
4. Make a pet feel loved
5. Feed a pet

## Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how to take care of a pet.



## Tip Before Takeoff

Your family might not be able to have a pet right now. That's okay! You can do this badge with a friend's or neighbor's pet, a classroom pet, or another pet that could use your help.



## Step 1: Find out what care different pets need

Pets are as different as the people who love them. Play Pet Bingo to find out which pet would be the best fit for you.

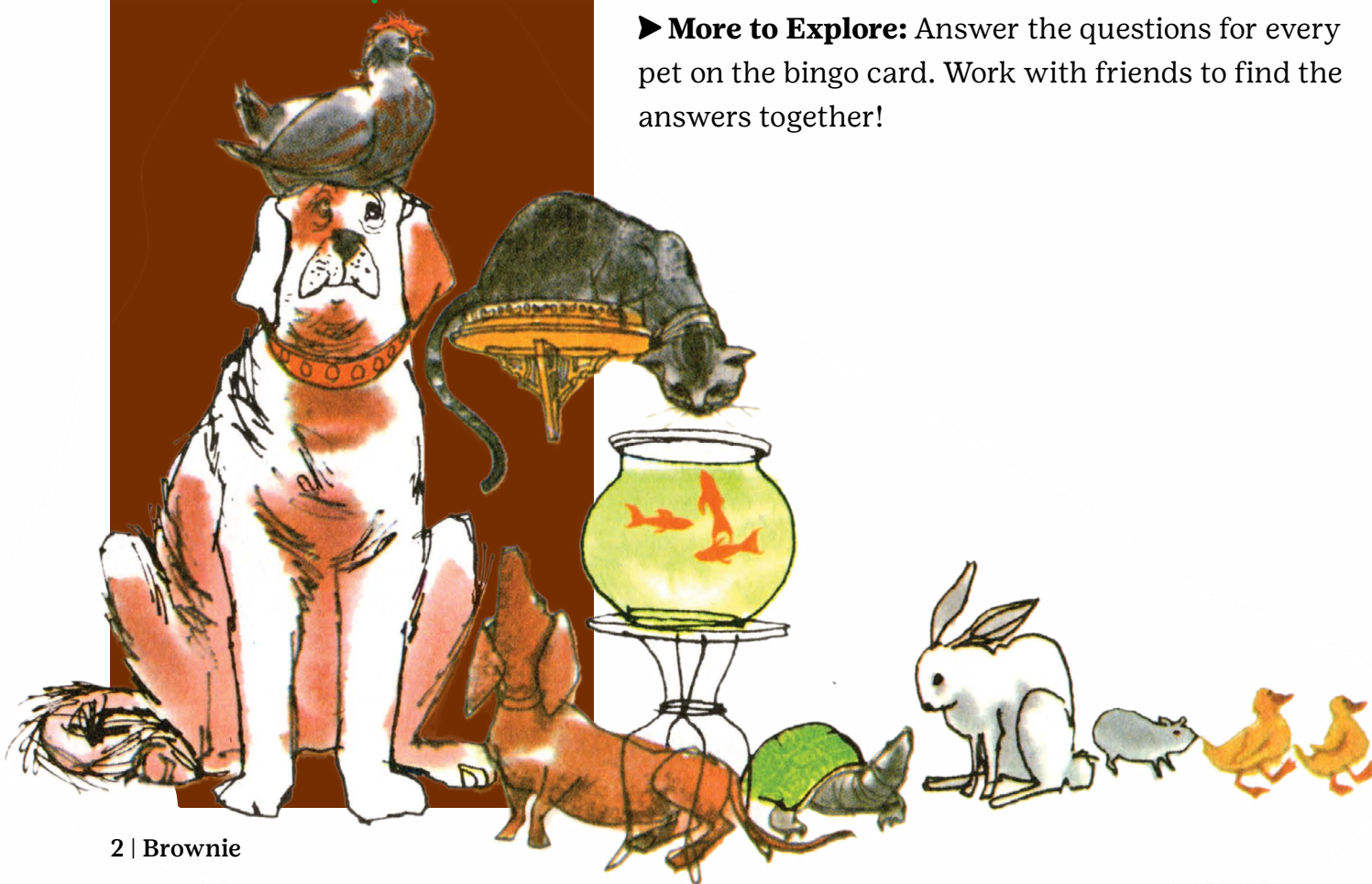
### Choices—do one:

**Play bingo at a pet supply store.** Ask the staff for help! You can visit a store in person, or ask a store employee to give you a virtual tour.

**Play bingo at a veterinarian's office.** Or you might ask a vet or vet's assistant to talk to your group, either in person or through video chat.

**Play bingo online.** Team up with an adult and your Brownie friends to research pets online.

► **More to Explore:** Answer the questions for every pet on the bingo card. Work with friends to find the answers together!



# Pet Bingo

**Mouse**



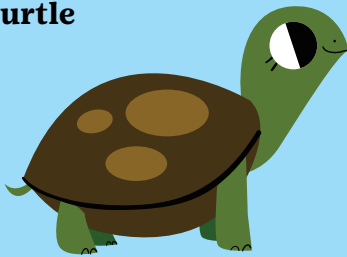
**Dog**



**Hamster**

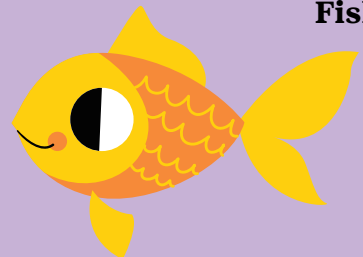


**Turtle**

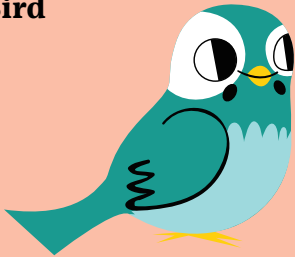


**Draw a pet of your choice.**

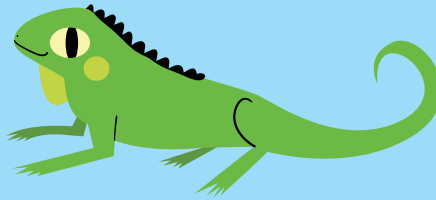
**Fish**



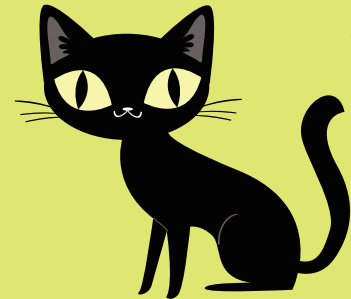
**Bird**



**Iguana**



**Cat**

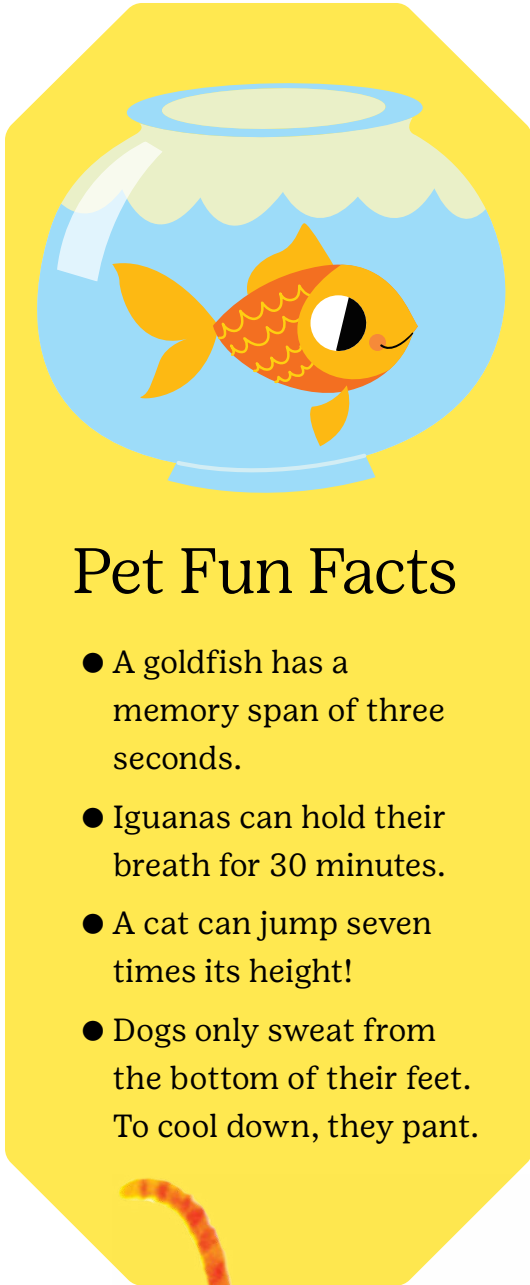


## How to Play:

Pick one of the squares. Then answer these questions about the animal listed:

- How much does it cost to care for this pet per year?
- How much space does this pet need?
- How much food does this pet need per day?
- What kind of human contact does this pet like?

When you find the answers to the questions above, make an X on the square. You're finished when you've made one row up, across, or diagonal!



## Pet Fun Facts

- A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds.
- Iguanas can hold their breath for 30 minutes.
- A cat can jump seven times its height!
- Dogs only sweat from the bottom of their feet. To cool down, they pant.

## Step 2: Keep a pet comfy

Pets need a clean and comfortable place to live—if their cage, crate, or tank is dirty, they can get sick. Learn what one pet needs to have a home sweet home.

### Choices—do one:

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**Be the cage or tank cleaner.** For two weeks, take charge of the cleaning for a fish, hamster, bird, cat, or other pet with its own little house or litter box.

.....  
► **For more fun:** Make an aquarium castle with a recycled plastic bottle. Before you start, talk to an expert to make sure the plastic is safe for the fish.

.....  
**Learn how to muck out a stall.** Team up with an adult and find out how to clean a stall where farm animals (like horses, cows, pigs, or goats) are kept. Help at a stable or farm by doing it three times.

.....  
**Make a cozy sleeping space for a pet.** Find out how the pet likes to sleep by talking to an expert, in person or online. Then make a bed for a cat or dog, or a sleeping nook for a hamster or guinea pig.





## Step 3: Help a pet stay healthy and safe

Just like humans, pets need special care to stay healthy. Find out how to keep them safe and feeling good.

### Choices—do one:

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**Ask a veterinarian about health issues for three pets.** What are some common sicknesses? Does the pet need any special shots? Make a list that shows each pet, its possible health issues, and how you would keep it healthy. Share your lists with pet owners!

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**Help a dog get exercise for one week.** Team up with an adult to take a dog on a walk or to a dog park. Decide where to go based on the weather, how much exercise the dog needs, and where it is safe and fun.

► **For more fun:** Draw a map of the best place to walk a dog in your neighborhood. Share it with dog owners.

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**Find out how to be responsible when taking a pet outdoors.** With help from an adult, go online or look in books. Find out how you can keep the pet comfortable and safe. For example, many dogs love to go on long walks and hikes. Just like you would pack snacks and drinks for a hike, you should do the same for your dog! Then take your pet outside with an adult and practice keeping it safe and healthy.



### More to Explore

**Try an activity from the 1940 World Interpreter badge.** Find out what people around the world call the sounds that pets make. For example, when making a dog sound, people in the United States say “woof” and people in Russia say “gav.” When making a duck sound, people in Romania say “mac” and people in France say “coin.” What other sounds can you find?





## Step 4: Make a pet feel loved

Pets need attention and kindness—and maybe some snuggles—as well as time to have fun and play. Learning to be a good pet owner takes patience!

### Choices—do one:

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**Make up a game to play with a pet.** It might be throw-and-catch for a dog, a game with a feather toy for a cat, or a small maze game for a hamster. Write your game down so you can share it with others. Then play the game with a pet you have or know!

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**Make a simple pet toy.** You could fill an old sock with catnip, knot the top, and give it to a cat to play with. Or make a sock doll to keep a dog happy. A rabbit may like a tunnel made from a cardboard box!

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**Learn how three different kinds of pets communicate their feelings.** For example, a happy cat or bird may purr, or a dog that wants a walk might scratch at a door. Share what you've learned by playing animal charades. Have friends or family guess which pet you are and what you're feeling.

► **For more fun:** Make a list of a pet's favorite things (like games, treats, and toys). Post it where people who love the pet can see it.

## Step 5: Feed a pet

One of the most important responsibilities of a pet owner is knowing what their pet eats, what it can't eat, and how much it needs to eat. And, of course, making sure there's food when the pet gets hungry.

### Choices—do one:

.....  
**If you have a pet of your own, make a feeding schedule.** Make sure you know when and how often your pet needs to eat. Then feed your pet using your schedule for two weeks.  
.....

**Volunteer to feed someone else's pet.** Create a feeding schedule, then feed the pet at least once a day for a week. Make sure an adult goes with you.  
.....

**Make a pet budget for two pets.** Add up how much it costs to feed two different pets for one month. Think about regular food and any extras, such as treats or vitamins. Does the cost surprise you?

► **For more fun:** Make tasty pet treats. Freeze low-sodium chicken broth in an ice cube tray to make a cool treat for a dog, or work with an adult to find a recipe for treats you can bake. You could give the treats to a friend's or neighbor's pet. Make a card for the pet to go along with your present!

## Wild Animals Make Bad Pets

Wild animals are animals normally found in nature. They may seem interesting and fun to play with. But keeping wild animals as pets can be harmful.

Wild animals become pets when someone brings them indoors or buys them from the pet trade. The pet trade is made up of people who sell animals from nature.

These animals aren't comfortable living with humans. In nature, they find their own food. They have lots of space to move around. They also need special care that most people aren't able to give them.

Having wild animals as pets is also not safe for you. They can carry diseases that make humans and pets sick.

Before you choose a pet, find out if it's safe to bring home. If you love wild animals, learn what you can do to keep them safe and healthy where they belong—in the wild!





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# Volunteer's Guide to the Pets Badge\*

Find tips and ideas to help guide your troop through this badge.

## Step 1: Find out what care different pets need • 30–40 minutes

**Materials for all choices:** “Pet Bingo,” paper, pencils; computers, smartphones, or tablets

**Ask:** What is your favorite pet? **Share:** Pets are as different as the people who love them. In this step, we'll play Pet Bingo to find out which pet would be the best fit for you.

**Choices—do one:**

- **Play bingo in a pet supply store.** Reach out to your troop's network to help Brownies connect with a pet supply store and coordinate a visit or virtual tour. Refer to “Pet Bingo” on page 3 of the badge booklet for game instructions and a bingo card.
- **Play bingo at a veterinarian's office.** Reach out to your troop's network to help Brownies connect with a veterinarian and coordinate an office visit, in person or virtually. Or invite them to speak to your troop. Refer to “Pet Bingo” on page 3 of the badge booklet for game instructions and a bingo card.
- **Play bingo online.** Ask Brownies to team up with an adult and their Brownie friends to research pets online. Refer to “Pet Bingo” on page 3 of the badge booklet for game instructions and a bingo card.

## Step 2: Keep a pet comfy • 30–40 minutes

**Materials for all choices:** *Varies based on experience*

**Ask:** Where do pets live? What do they need to be comfortable in their homes? **Share:** Pets need a clean and comfortable place to live—if their cage, crate, or tank is dirty, they can get sick. In this step, we'll learn about a specific pet and what it needs to have a home sweet home.

**Choices—do one:**

- **Be the cage or tank cleaner.** Find a kid-friendly video tutorial that teaches Brownies how to clean tanks, cages, and other animal homes. Provide an animal home (like a fish tank or hamster cage) and have them take turns demonstrating how to clean it. Or invite an expert to lead

a demonstration. Ask, “Is cleaning a pet home easier or harder than you thought it would be? Why?”

- **Learn how to muck out a stall.** Reach out to your troop's network to help Brownies connect with a stable or farm. If possible, coordinate a visit or invite an expert to talk to your troop. Ask them to lead a demonstration. Or find a kid-friendly video tutorial that teaches Brownies how to muck out a stall. Then have them take turns acting out each step of the process in small groups.
- **Make a cozy sleeping space for a pet.** Reach out to your troop's network to help Brownies connect with an expert, like a pet supply store employee or veterinarian. Invite them to talk to your troop. Work with Brownies to prepare questions ahead of time. Then ask the expert to demonstrate how to make a bed or sleeping nook for a pet. If possible, have Brownies make one of their own.

## Step 3: Help a pet stay healthy and safe • 20–30 minutes

**Ask:** What do you need to stay healthy and safe? **Share:** Just like humans, pets need special care to stay healthy. Find out about how to keep them safe and feeling good.

**Choices—do one:**

- **Ask a veterinarian about health issues for three pets.** Reach out to your troop's network to help Brownies connect with a veterinarian. Invite them to speak to your troop, in person or virtually. Work with Brownies to prepare questions ahead of time. Break Brownies up into small groups and help them make a list or draw a picture of one of the three pets discussed. Have them include possible health issues and how to keep the pet healthy.
- Materials:** paper, coloring supplies, pencils; computers, smartphones, or tablets
- **Help a dog get exercise for one week.** Have Brownies pretend they are dog sitting for a friend or family member. (Or they can talk about their own dogs.) Discuss where they would walk a dog in their neighborhood and how much exercise it needs in a week. Have them draw

\*Detailed choice activities, meeting tools, and additional resources and materials can be found within the Volunteer Toolkit on [my.girlscouts.org](https://my.girlscouts.org).

pictures of items they'd need to bring with them to keep their pet safe and happy.

**Materials:** *paper, coloring supplies*

- **Find out how to be responsible when taking a pet outdoors.** Have Brownies choose a “troop pet” to learn more about. Ask, “How can you keep the pet safe and away from things that could hurt it? What would you pack? What should you know before taking your troop pet outside?” Help Brownies do group research online or look in books to find out how to be responsible when taking their pet outdoors. Have them make a list or draw pictures to show what they've learned. If possible, have an expert bring the animal of your troop's choice for a visit or take them to a pet supply store, animal shelter, or local farm where they can have a hands-on experience with the animal under expert supervision.

**Materials:** *computers, smartphones, or tablets (or books about pets); paper, pencils, coloring supplies*

## Step 4: Make a pet feel loved • 20–30 minutes

**Ask:** What would you do to make a pet feel loved? **Share:** Pets need attention and kindness, and lots of time to have fun and play.

**Choices—do one:**

- **Make up a game to play with a pet.** Divide Brownies into small groups. Have each group choose a pet to create a game for. Ask, “What game would you play with your pet?” Have them write down or draw pictures of how to play the game so they can share it with others later. Then have them share their game with the troop and demonstrate or explain how it would be played.

**Materials:** *paper, pencils, coloring supplies*

- **Make a simple pet toy.** Go online and choose a simple pet toy for your Brownies to create. Prepare an example ahead of time. Have a copy of the instructions to refer to during the meeting. Ask, “What kind of toys do pets play with?” Help Brownies make their own pet toys. They can make them for their own pet, gift them to a pet owner they know, or donate them to an animal shelter.

**Materials:** *Varies based on experience*

- **Learn how three different kinds of pets communicate their feelings.** Ask, “How do pets communicate their feelings? What sounds do they make? How do they move their bodies?” Discuss, then help Brownies go online to learn more. On slips of paper, ask them to write down or draw a pet they learned about and a feeling it

communicates. Put the slips in a pile and have Brownies pick one at random. Have them act out how the pet would express that particular feeling. Have the troop guess what pet and feeling is being acted out.

**Materials:** *computers, smartphones, or tablets; slips of paper, pencils*

## Step 5: Feed a pet • 20–30 minutes

**Ask:** What foods do pets eat? What are some things pets should not eat? **Share:** One important responsibility of a pet owner is knowing what their pet eats, what it can't eat, and how much it needs to eat. And, of course, making sure there's food ready when the pet gets hungry.

**Choices—do one:**

- **If you have a pet of your own, make a feeding schedule.** Divide Brownies into small groups. Assign a pet to each group. Have each group take turns going online or looking in children's books or magazines to find out when and how often their pet needs to eat. Help Brownies make their assigned pet a feeding schedule for a week. If time allows, have Brownies decorate them with drawings of the pet, their food, or anything else they'd like. If Brownies have a pet at home, ask them to create a feeding schedule for their pet and follow the schedule for two weeks.

**Materials:** *computers, smartphones, or tablets (or books about pets); paper, coloring supplies*

- **Volunteer to feed someone's pet.** Follow the directions in the previous choice to help Brownies practice making a feeding schedule for a pet in small groups. Have them make a feeding schedule for someone else's pet at home and follow it for a week, if possible.

**Materials:** *computers, smartphones, or tablets (or books about pets); paper, coloring supplies*

- **Make a pet budget for two pets.** Ask, “What are some types of common pets?” Have Brownies vote on the two they'd like to use for the activity. Help them go online to figure out what foods, treats, or vitamins a pet would need for an entire month. Use a large sheet of paper to record the lists. Ask, “What do you think the total price of all these food items would be for a whole month?” Help Brownies look up how much each item costs and how much of each item they'd need to feed a pet for a month. Record the prices and quantities on the sheet of paper. Then help your troop work together to add them all up. Ask, “Does the cost surprise you? Did you think feeding a pet would cost more or less?”

**Materials:** *computers, smartphones, or tablets; large sheet of paper, marker, calculator*

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