

Could My Dogs Save Me Money in The Garden?



I'm casually looking to move into a new place where I would have more of a yard. This means that I would have more space for plant life. It also means that my dogs would have a place to romp around. However, those two things would be shared. For the most part, I assume that the dogs aren't great for a garden. They dig, they chew, they barrel their big bodies around and bang into things. But I'm trying to see it another way. What benefits could the dogs have for the garden? Could they even help me save money there?

Pest Control

Dogs obviously have an incredible sense of smell. And mine are

keen on protecting their territory. This natural instinct could make them excellent at warding off common garden pests. Squirrels, raccoons, and other critters might think twice before venturing into a garden where a dog is on patrol. This isn't an issue where I'm living now. However, I know that in homes I've stayed at in the past where there are bigger yards, this is definitely a common issue. My dogs wouldn't harm the other animals but they would likely chase them off which means that those creatures couldn't come in and damage the plant life.

Natural Fertilizer?

One of the questions I have is whether or not their dog waste could be used as a natural fertilizer. In other words, can I compost their poop and use it for plants? After all, my two large dogs generate a whole lot of waste!

As far as I can tell from searching online and asking in forums, it seems that you can safely compost your own dog's waste. You don't want to use it as fertilizer on edible plants. In other words, if I was going to grow vegetables to eat then I wouldn't want to use my dog's waste there.

However, if the plants are hardy and aren't going to be consumed by humans, then it seems safe to compost the waste for that purpose. The [American Kennel Club](#) explains that the two biggest concerns are the odor and the potential for parasites or germs. However, they note that the odor is easy to control when composting. More importantly, they explain that if you're just in your own yard with your own dogs and they get regular wellness treatments then it's actually fairly unlikely that you're going to have parasites.

It's something I'd have to do more research on but it seems possible that the dogs could save money in the garden by providing this natural fertilizer opportunity.

Benefits of Digging Dogs

My dogs dig. I tend to assume that this would be a problem in a garden. However, that isn't necessarily the only way to view this story. If the dogs can learn to dig in certain places where they're allowed to dig, then they might actually offer some benefits to the garden. For example:

1. **Weed Control:** Dogs can help control weeds by trampling or digging them up. Their natural curiosity can lead to them digging in the garden, inadvertently uprooting weeds and preventing their growth.
2. **Compost Turners:** Some dogs enjoy digging in compost piles. While this behavior may not be appreciated in all cases, it can be beneficial for turning and aerating compost, which accelerates decomposition and produces nutrient-rich compost for your garden.
3. **Soil Aeration:** When dogs play or run in the garden, their paws can help aerate the soil. This improved soil structure enhances root growth and water penetration, benefiting plant health.

Could I teach the dogs to dig in the right places?

Obviously, there's more to unpack here. Could the dogs learn where to dig and where not to dig? Possibly. I currently allow them to play with recyclables in the home. They know which area contains the stuff they're allowed to destroy and they don't destroy other things.

So, they could definitely learn. For example, I could teach them to dig in the compost. Although, honestly, I have mixed feelings about that because then there's compost on their paws when they come back in the house. But I don't know if I could really teach them about digging up weeds and leaving the rest of the plants alone.

The Joy of the Garden

Honestly, the thing that my dogs do most for me is bring me lots of joy. They live in the moment. They remind me to be curious, open, and playful. As a result, they help enliven any space so that I appreciate it more. They would definitely do this if we had a bigger yard for them. They would definitely help me appreciate that space more.

This has the potential to save money while adding joy in a few different ways. First of all, it means that we would all spend more time in the yard together. This means that I wouldn't have to spend money on a dog walker to take them out because they would get their exercise with me in the yard. As a byproduct of that, I would get my own exercise in the yard. More time in the yard means less time on other forms of potentially expensive entertainment to pass the time.

Also, when you're in the garden more, you're going to focus more on what's there. I imagine that spending more time in the garden would allow me to see more potential there. It would allow me to see how to help different plants thrive. Moreover, it would show me opportunities for creative expression in the gardening process. As my dogs investigate things up close, so will I. All of this has the potential to improve the garden, the lives of myself and the pups, and maybe even cost savings on our activities back there.

What do you think? Are dogs good for a garden, bad for a garden, or are there just simply pros and cons to consider?

Read More:

- [5 Reasons I Enjoy Lia's Living Almanac](#)
- [How to Garden Frugally](#)
- [20 Tips for Gardening with Dogs](#)
- [10 Household Items That Can Be Composted – and 5 That Can't](#)