

The Best Dog Products of 2009

Check out the **DOG FANCY** editors' picks for the year's most innovative products.

This year, we received 110 entries for our Editors' Choice awards. We were more than up to the challenge of sorting through them all and choosing only the coolest, most innovative products. In some cases, this meant recognizing a novel product to the dog scene. But we also saw some fresh takes on classic items like collars, leashes, and bowls that upped the ante on innovation and practicality.

Read on to see which 21 products we dubbed the best of 2009. Plus, the **DOG FANCY** editorial staff — Editor Susan Chaney, Managing Editor Annamaria Barajas, Associate Web Editor Andrea Bravo, Associate Editor John Schwartze, and Assistant Editor Katy French — divulges a little about what made each product worthy of the honor.

Neater Feeder

"Let's face it. Cleaning up after dogs with no 'table manners' can be the bane of our existence. With its elevated walls, this pet feeder cuts down on food and water spillage, which also means you'll potentially save money on paper towels and keep ants from coming to dinner. It's also a cinch to wash. With two sizes available and optional leg extensions, it's a no-brainer regardless of what size your pooch is. We're surprised no one thought up this product sooner." — John Schwartze
\$34.99 and \$57.99, from TowerStar Pets; 877-917-7387; www.neaterfeeder.com

Pet Flies Safety Vest

"For many of us, the only time we can walk our dogs is after work. That's why I thought these reflective vests were a great way to keep your four-legged pal safe and visible when it's dark out. They come in three colors, seven sizes, and have some humorous labels on them like 'K-9 Special Forces.' The vests also feature a faux fur lining and easily slip over collars and harnesses, but also include a 'D' ring to attach a leash." — J.S.
\$23 and \$28, from Pet Flies; 818-558-3597; www.petflies.com

BISSELL ShedAway Pet Grooming Vacuum Attachment

"Until I saw this vacuum attachment, I always thought grooming a dog indoors created more work than I began with. With the combination of a shedding blade and your vacuum's suction, this attachment will keep loose hair from ending up on your furniture and clothes. It comes with adapters to fit all major vacuum brands. Just hook it up, hit the switch, and give your buddy a good brushing." — J.S.
\$29.99, from BISSELL Homecare; 800-237-7691; www.bissell.com

Hip Doggie Loofah Dental Toy

"I admit, the more things I can use to keep a dog's mug sparkly, the happier I am because it cuts down on maintenance that can turn into a struggle. These chew toys are a healthy way to keep your dog's teeth clean between brushing and checkups. The materials are made from USDA certified organic vegetable matter and have gum- and tooth-cleaning properties, according to Hip Doggie. With natural beef or chicken flavoring, and different shapes and sizes, they'll definitely keep your dog entertained and smiling bright." — J.S.
\$4 to \$14, from Hip Doggie; 818-505-8646; www.hipdoggie.com

Kurgo Collaps-a-bowl

"When preparing for outdoor excursions with your dogs, you need to keep them hydrated, but who wants to carry around a big cumbersome bowl on a long hike? Now you can quench your pal's thirst in a convenient way with this lightweight, compact bowl. It holds 24 ounces of water and collapses to easily fit in a backpack or glove compartment. The material is also dishwasher safe." — J.S.
\$9.99, from Kurgo; 877-847-3868; www.kurgo.com

Harrison's Organic Dog Cookie Mix

"Sure, there are plenty of recipes for homemade dog treats, but this mix takes the guesswork out of baking. Add the dry mix of organic barley, rolled oats, and cane sugar to water, and the included HEALx Sunshine Factor — organic red palm fruit oil that replaces vegetable oil — for easy-to-bake treats in minutes. What dog wouldn't love a homemade, healthy snack?" — Andrea Bravo
\$6.99, from Harrison's Pet Products; 800-346-0269; www.harrisonspetproducts.com

Flappy Dog Toys

"These toys come in several varieties — Ruffy, Fleecie, Floatie, and so on — to please any chewer. The 'flaps' are dangling strips of braided fleece, rope, or other material depending on the style of toy. Let your dog grab one, and watch as the product's tagline rings true: 'We make 'em for dogs to shake 'em.'" — A.B. \$6.99 to \$17.99, from OurPet's; 800-565-2695; www.flappydogtoys.com

DogBag Duffels

"Being caught without a pickup bag when you need one is a dog-owner faux pas. Thankfully these mini duffels come in a variety of prints and colors and can attach to any leash, bag, or belt loop, so you can always be ready. The poop bags inside are made from recycled plastic and available in fun scents like citrus blend, ocean, rainforest, and lavender." — A.B. \$6.95 (two rolls and duffel), \$12.95 (four rolls and duffel), and \$8.95 (four refill rolls), from Doggie Walk Bags; 877-364-2247; www.dogbag.com

To Go Bowl

"Your dog won't go thirsty on long drives with these car-friendly bowls, nor will you have to pull over every half hour to give him some water. They fit in your car's standard cup holder and have a splash guard and lid to keep water from going everywhere on a bumpy ride. And when you get to your destination, just pop off the base and set it on the floor. The base can be used to store food or treats, so you've got a multi-purpose feeding station all in one package. How cool is that?" — J.S. \$19.99, from Furry Travelers; 866-553-8779; www.furrytravelers.com

BISSELL Smart Details Pet Hair Broom

"Yes, we've heard of vacuums and all kinds of wonderful electrical hair management systems. But sometimes you just need a broom. And this one is made just for dog hair. Buried in the bristles are three rows of firm, thick, rubbery ones that capture dog hair. You can use it on bare floors and on rugs. If it can tackle my kitchen rugs, which collect the hair of a canine shorthaired shedder and two big cats, I'm pretty sure it can handle yours." — Susan Chaney \$24.99, from BISSELL Homecare; 800-237-7691; www.bissell.com

Doggie Doo Drain

"OK, we know it sounds gross, but it's a great idea! In many places, this has got to be the best way to get rid of dog poop. You simply screw it into the sewer or septic clean out outside your home. When you pick up your dog's poop, unscrew the top, drop it in, run some water down, and that's it! Your dog's waste gets the same treatment as human waste, and you don't add to your local landfill." — S.C. \$44.95, from Klauber Enterprises; 877-577-1757; www.doggiedoodrain.com

Towel Tog

"I can't wait to get one of these Towel Togs for my dog Max. He tolerates a bath quite well, but once I've given him even a few rubs with a towel, he wants to run around and roll around. I figure that with his Towel Tog securely in place, he can pretty much dry himself — well, except maybe his ears. This inventive product could make bathing just a little bit easier." — S.C. \$32.95 to \$69.95, from Wet Dog Solutions; 269-273-9392; www.toweltogs.com

Port-A-Poo

"You've been there. We all have. You're walking your dog and trying to hold onto one or two or even three partially filled cleanup bags. Your dog decides to walk on the other side. You're trying to switch the leash and the bags without getting your legs tangled. Teeter no more. This clever device attaches to your leash, then using a teeth-based clip, hangs the bag or bags from the leash. Now you've got both hands free again. Very cool." — S.C. \$9.95, regular or mini, from Mind, Body and Paw; 888-488-0766; www.portapoo.com

HitchN Leash

"How many times have you tried tying your dog's leash in a knot around a tree stump or pole when you've had to secure him during a walk or other outing? Well, the people at PetZen must have felt your pain. They created a leash with two carabiner sizes and a D-ring to make such a task much simpler. Outdoor enthusiasts and urbanites will love the convenience of this practical leash." — Annamaria Barajas \$18.99, from PetZen Products; 877-563-5151; www.petzenproducts.com

Gate-n-Crate

"For those of us who love our dogs and our house, it can be tough to find things that work for both. Luckily, this gate is the

answer to a dog-owner's dilemma. I love that it's portable and easy to put together (for assembly-challenged folks like me), and the hardwood finish blends in beautifully. Most importantly, it's sturdy enough to keep your dog safe and secluded without looking like an eyesore. And if you live in a smaller place like me, the side panels move almost 360 degrees to adapt to virtually any space you have." — Katy French \$129.99, from Merry Products Corp.; www.merryproducts.com

Funagle board game

"A board game you can play with your dog! What's not to love? Besides being fun, I like that Funagle is good for your dog, too. It gets his mind active and tests those training skills you've worked so hard on." — A.M.B. \$35.50, from Darf Inc.; 503-292-4149; www.darfinc.com

WarmSense Cuddle Nest

"I'm a huge fan of green ideas, and this bed combines some of my favorite things: recycling and warmth. Not only is the bed's filling made from recycled soda bottles, but the pillow is made from WarmSense insulation material, which reflects your dog's own body heat to keep him nice and toasty in the winter. That seems pretty genius to me. Now, if only I could get one for myself ..." — K.F. From \$49.99; from Paus; 888-302-7287; www.petpaus.com

Kurgo Wander Carrier

"When I'm out and about I like to be comfortable — and so does your dog. This carrier makes traveling a whole lot easier. The mesh interior gives your pup a comfy room with a view, and the padded shoulder strap gives you a little support while you're supporting him. I don't always travel lightly, so the extra pockets come in handy for storage. And I don't always travel gently, so I especially like that the interior tether attaches to your dog's harness, and the carrier can be buckled into a seat belt during car rides." — K.F. \$79.99, from Kurgo; 877-847-3868; www.kurgo.com

Good Buddy Mimi's Favorite Mac & Cheese Flavor Dog Cookies

"Each purchase of these classic mac & cheese flavored treats donates dog food and money to FreeKibble.com, which supports shelter pets. So you know you're helping a needy dog out there somewhere every time you feed your dog a treat. Everyone at DOG FANCY was awed by this worthy cause." — A.M.B. \$4.99, from Castor & Pollux Pet Works; 800-875-7518; www.castorpolluxpet.com

Tote 'N Store Folding Dog Ramp

"You might see this ramp and think it looks like too much trouble, but if you've got an older, arthritic dog who loves car rides or a petite pup who goes everywhere with you, this ramp is amazing. I couldn't believe how light it was — only 6 pounds! — and how easily it folded up. Dogs up to 65 pounds can use it to comfortably enter and exit the car. Easy to carry and easy to use, I give this ramp an A+!" — K.F. \$89.99, from PetSTEP International; 877-738-7837; www.petstep.com

The Pet Barrier

"When we pulled The Pet Barrier out of its box, I thought, 'I don't think so.' But after opening it up, trying it out, and reading about it, my opinion changed to 'Aha!' This cleverly designed barrier blocks both access and vision between rooms or even across your front door. And you know how it goes: What your dog can't see, he typically won't bark at. It would be so wonderful to have my front door open, knowing that Max is safely inside with me." — S.C. \$89.95, from The Pet Barrier; 866-872-5752; www.thepetbarrier.com

- See the winning dog products from 2008 -