

Necessary Equipment and Supplies

By Sandra Jones-Schauble

Every Cavalier needs the following:

- **A crate or kennel.** 20” high by 18” wide by 20” to 24” long. The dimensions can vary by a couple of inches in any direction, but start with these. The crate/kennel can be fiberglass or wire, as you prefer. I prefer a wire crate so the dogs can see around themselves, and the wire allows for better air circulation. The wire crate/kennel will come with a floor tray that slides out the front and will have a door in front or on the side or both. I like the doors on both the front and the side. I have a small car, and the side opening door on the crate allows me to place the crate side to side rather than back to front in the car’s cargo area. Do not get a soft-sided kennel or a wooden kennel (lovely pieces of furniture as they are) as your primary kennel. I have a girl that, if suitably motivated, can tear through a soft sided kennel in ten minutes. I have others who will chew on wood bars or wood edges out of boredom.



- **Dishes.** Stainless steel is the best. They will go in your dishwasher and come out germ-free. They don’t chip (chips harbor bacteria) or break. There is a style for everyone’s taste. I like the ones that hang on the side of wire crates, as I don’t have to go “fishing” for them when they’re empty. A word about dishes and holders. Don’t raise the dish to a dog’s chest or chin. In order to eat without taking in too much air, which can cause bloat, a dog needs to have his/her head down. There are a lot of very attractive dish holders for sale, but buy one that keeps the dishes close to the ground. Get two dishes – one for water and one for food.



- **Rugs.** You will need a couple of washable rugs or crate pads. The Dollar Store is a good place to get inexpensive rugs. Crate pads are also available relatively inexpensively at PetSmart and other pet supply stores.



- **Collar & leash.** I like the adjustable snap collars. Once you get them adjusted to your dog, they go on easily and quickly. The dogs seem comfortable with them, too. Be sure you have identification attached to your dog’s collar. I like a plain, six-foot leather lead. It’s strong



and soft to the hand. But the leashes that match the collars are fine, too. If you get a flexi lead, be sure you also get a regular six-foot lead. Some dog parks and all dog

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shows prohibit the flexi lead. If you prefer to use a harness instead of a collar, there are many available to choose among.

- **Toys.** Try to buy those that are appropriate to the size of your Cavalier. My dogs like the soft, plush toys, especially the AKC brands with the “lifelike sounds”, and also the flavored Nylabones. I do not give them rawhide chewies, as my dogs have long, heavily coated ears, and they will carry the chewies around in those ears. They also



love to play fetch with a tennis ball. Do not use anything smaller, as there is a danger of swallowing small balls, which will require surgery to remove.



- **Shampoo and conditioner.** At some point you will have to bathe that Cavalier. Buy a high end shampoo at a dog supply shop or on-line. I like “The Stuff” as a conditioner, but there are many other dog conditioners that are equally good. Use as directed. You may also wish to use Dawn dishwashing soap on the ears, but only the ears. It will strip the oils out and leave the ears looking clean and fluffy. (For complete information on grooming, see Grooming Requirements and Equipment.)
- **Old towels.** These are good for drying your wet Cavalier, whether from the bath or rain, and for drying feet. You will probably also need a handheld hair dryer to dry your dog after his/her bath.
- **Grooming essentials.** (See Grooming Requirements and Equipment.)
- **Spray bottles or squirt guns.** Get ones that produce a strong squirt without a lot of mist. These are essential for training! When you see your sweet rescue chewing on an electrical cord – the word NO and a strong squirt of plain water will stop the behavior. Then you can distract him/her with a toy. There will be hundreds of times when you will need to stop a behavior. When you can’t reach the dog – squirt! So get lots of these bottles and put them in handy locations around the house. I prefer the bottles, as sometimes the guns leak.



- **Dog-proofing your home and yard.** Cavaliers are not generally known as diggers or climbers, but a rescue can have learned all kinds of behaviors that are atypical. So walk your fenced yard slowly and carefully, covering every square inch. Pick up any attractive bits a dog might think look tasty. Check for dips under the fence, however slight, that might tempt a digger. Check to be sure there is nowhere that a climber could get over your fence. Get a good book from the library about poisonous plants

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and transplant outside the yard any that might tempt a chewer. Go into your garage and toss out, or put out of reach, antifreeze, paint thinner and any other possibly poisonous compounds.

Walk through your house equally carefully. Cover the whole house, whether you intend to let the dog in a particular room or not. Put away small objects that could look like toys. Make sure all cleaning agents and medications are in cabinets where you do not keep any food items. Transfer all food items to overhead cabinets if possible. Check electrical cords and put excess cord under a rug or wrap and bind the excess or even run the cords through PVC piping.

Do not leave socks or undergarments where your dog can get them. For some reason (your scent probably) dogs seem to go through a phase where eating a sock or an undergarment seems like a good idea – to them perhaps; to us it can mean a very expensive trip to the vet to have the item surgically removed from the dog's gut. As you inspect your house and yard, use your creative side to think like a dog!

Optional, but nice:

- **Pet beds.** I have several, but the one they use the most is sized for a single Cavalier and sits in the bottom of my computer cabinet. There are usually three Cavaliers in it at any one time. From which I gather that it is the placement rather than the bed that counts.



- **Toothbrush & toothpaste.** Most veterinarians recommend a regular tooth brushing for dogs, but use the doggy toothpaste and a small, very soft toothbrush. If you don't brush their teeth regularly, you will need to have the teeth cleaned and scaled by your veterinarian once a year. For more information, see the chapter on Grooming.

- **Coat & boots.** If your Cavalier has a nice heavy coat of its own, you may not need a coat; and if you live in the suburbs or country you may not need the boots either. But a



lot of rescues come with a thin coat and need the protection against the cold and the elements. The best coats have a Velcro closure across the chest and another under the tummy. With this design you don't have to wrestle with your dog to get legs into

sleeves. Boots are really good to protect against streets and sidewalks that have been treated with salt. The brand that seems to be most recommended is Pawz Disposable Boots, available on-line at Amazon or check with your local PetSmart. You can also

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coat the pads of their feet with a mixture of Vaseline and Bag Balm and just wash it off when you get home.

- **A book about Cavaliers.** A recent publication that seems to cover most topics is: *The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel*, by Myra Savant-Harris with consulting veterinary editor, Wayne Hunthausen, DVM. T.F. H. Publications, Inc. 2009



- **(Optional):** An absolutely gorgeous coffee table book about Cavaliers that just happens to have some good information as well: *The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel in Fact and Fancy*, by Barbara Garnett-Wilson. Cascade Publications, 2007.

