01 / PRICE WITH A PLAN

Pet Sitting Business Pricing Guide

A visit price needs to cover the time around the visit as well as the care itself. A workable route and clear service boundaries help keep both pricing and scheduling realistic.

Four things to include in your quote

- Care: visit length, number of pets, agreed tasks, and individual care needs.
- Travel: distance, route, parking, and time between customers.
- Schedule: time-sensitive visits, availability, and the number of visits you can deliver.
- Costs: transport, supplies, administration, and allocated overhead.

Keep the offer clear

Define visit length and inclusions before advertising a rate. Explain charges for extra agreed tasks, additional pets, or out-of-area travel where relevant. Confirm your terms before the booking, rather than adding unexpected fees later.

A useful starting principle

Plan to cover job costs, all labor time, and a share of overhead, then decide what profit allowance your business needs. Check whether customers value the offer at that price. If the numbers do not work, revisit the scope or process rather than guessing lower.

02 / TEST YOUR ASSUMPTIONS

A simple planning example

Example only: a $25 visit takes 30 minutes of care and 20 minutes of travel and administration. That is $30 revenue per labor hour ($25 divided by 50/60 hours), before transport, overhead, taxes, and owner pay. Several visits do not automatically create a profitable route.

Three pricing mistakes to avoid

- Do not plan back-to-back visits without travel time.
- Do not promise care tasks you cannot reliably deliver.
- Do not offer discounts that make a time-sensitive booking unworkable.

Review after real jobs

Map a typical day and record time between visits. Review whether your service radius and booking limits support the rate you charge.

Use these examples to understand the calculation, not as market rates. Your costs, skills, demand, and local requirements will differ. No price or income result is guaranteed.

Continue with the practical decision guide and worksheet on the next pages.

Turn scope into a defensible quote

Work through the decision

Choose a service and care scope you can reliably deliver, such as agreed drop-in visits. A visit schedule, travel radius, and competence limits belong in the offer. Liking animals is not a substitute for clear instructions and dependable attendance.

Build the quote from total person-hours, direct costs, and allocated overhead. Select either a fixed profit allowance or an explicitly defined margin method. Check payment fees and taxes separately where applicable. At a meet-and-greet, confirm routines, behavior, feeding, access, contact arrangements, and any care needs. Accept only responsibilities you are competent to handle. Agree on what happens if access fails, a visit is delayed, or a pet appears unwell.

A situation to learn from

Illustrative calculation: three total labor hours at $25 per hour = $75 planned labor; $15 direct costs and $10 allocated overhead bring cost coverage to $100. A $20 fixed allowance produces $120. That is a 20% markup on cost coverage but a 16.67% margin on revenue; a 20% margin would require $125 before excluded fees or sales taxes.

How to respond

Illustrative pilot: three 30-minute visits appear to require 90 minutes, but travel and reporting add 60 minutes. The route uses 2.5 hours before other duties. Check required visit windows before adding another customer, even when the nominal rate looks attractive. Compare quote assumptions with actual jobs. If time or costs differ repeatedly, revise the assessment questions, scope, or pricing method. A competitor's advertised figure does not establish whether your costs are covered or the scope is comparable.

Quote assessment and review log

Use this page with your own service and circumstances. Record assumptions separately from confirmed facts, and update the plan using actual work.

Pet / care scope / visit pattern

Visit windows / travel / reporting time

Instructions / access / emergency contacts securely stored

Backup plan / exclusions / meet-and-greet questions

Labor rate / direct costs / overhead allocation

Allowance method / fees to check / final agreed scope

Review before taking the next step

Quote wording: Based on [assessed scope], the price is [amount] for [inclusions]. Exclusions: [items]. If conditions differ, we will assess and agree on any change before extra work begins. Insert your actual terms and obtain suitable advice where needed.

- [ ] Scope and condition assumptions recorded.
- [ ] All labor stages included.
- [ ] Costs not double counted.
- [ ] Quoted versus actual results reviewed.

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