



# Keeping your pets happy & healthy during hot weather



During times of hot weather and heatwaves it is important your pets have somewhere cool to retreat to. Unless owners take the necessary precautions, pets can rapidly suffer from heat stroke and even die on very hot days.

It is also important to remember that dark-haired cats and dogs will absorb more heat through their fur and that light-haired dogs are more susceptible to sunburn. Pets that are more likely to suffer in the heat include breeds such as pugs, bulldogs, greyhounds, persians and exotic shorthairs, and any with especially thick coats.

There are several things owners can do to protect their pets. These guidelines are especially important for owners of older pets, pets with thick coats, short noses, or pets adapted to cooler climates.

One of the most important things to remember is never to leave them in a hot place from which they cannot leave. So, never leave them locked in a room without air-conditioning or a car. Animals should not be locked in cars no matter what the weather but especially not in the heat.

## Tips for keeping your pet safe on hot days

- Never leave your animals in a vehicle – even with the windows open. A parked car is like an oven and temperatures can reach extreme levels in just a short period of time leading to fatal heat stroke.
- Pets can get dehydrated quickly – have plenty of fresh, clean water available. Make sure your pets have a shady place to get out of the sun, be careful not to over-exercise them, and keep them indoors when it's extremely hot.
- Know the symptoms of overheating in pets – including excessive panting, drooling, difficulty breathing, mild weakness, vomiting, or even collapse. Animals with flat faces are more susceptible to heat stroke.
- If you can't be home seek alternative arrangements – ask your neighbour or a family member to mind your pet. If your pet is home alone, where possible, leaving the air-conditioning or fans on in the house will help to keep pets cool.
- Don't leave pets unsupervised around a pool or at the beach – not all dogs are good swimmers so ensure you introduce your pets to water gradually and make sure they wear flotation devices when on boats.
- Don't let your pets linger on hot pavements – when the temperature is very high and being so close to the ground, your pooch's body can heat up quickly. Their sensitive paw pads can burn so keep dog walks during these times to a minimum.



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