

SUMMER HEAT!

On long summer days your dog will always want to play outside! Luckily, there are plenty of ways to enjoy the season.

Sunburn

Any area of the skin with a thin covering of hair is at risk to sunburn. Don't assume that your pet will be sensible - many won't even seek shade when it is very hot. They can get sun burnt on their nose and if the skin is broken there is an increased risk.

Dogs with white hair, short haired breeds and recently groomed dogs are also more prone to sunburn. You can use a high factor sunscreen lotion, one that would be safe to use on a child, on your dog's ears to protect against serious sun damage.

Any dog may suffer heatstroke in hot weather but the very young, the elderly and short-nosed breeds are most susceptible. The condition results in excessive panting, or even collapse, and requires emergency veterinary attention. To help combat this, ensure there is adequate shade in the garden and try not to over-exercise your pet when it's hot outside.

Keep them Watered

It almost goes without saying but always provide your dog with plenty of fresh drinking water at this time of year. If you feed canned food it can go bad quite quickly if left out in warm weather and may attract flies so you may want to consider feeding a dry pet food instead.

Keep a close watch on your pet's weight. Some dogs will spend more time exercising outdoors and so may need more food, but if the weather becomes very warm, inactivity will decrease the amount they need to eat.

Enjoying the summer

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- **Swimming:** Many dogs love the water, and a paddling pool is a great way to help beat the heat. Lakes and the sea are great places for your dog to play, fetch and swim. Just make sure your dog can easily get out of the water and there are no steep banks. Some dogs are afraid of the water, or only want to wade, so don't force him in if he seems hesitant or unsure. But if he jumps right in and starts perfecting his doggie-paddle, let him enjoy the experience. Just be sure to watch for excessive head shaking and ear scratching after the dip. This could be the sign of an ear infection. If swimming in a chlorinated pool rinse his coat of chlorine and dry completely.
- **Hiking:** If your dog is keen to hike, go for it. Just be aware that long walks on rough ground can be taxing on your dog's paws. Try short hikes at first, and gradually lengthen your treks. Remember to stop for rest and provide water frequently. There are quite a few small dog water bowls that fold flat that you can take for your dog to drink from.

Whether your dog spends a lot of time outside or has the chance to explore the great outdoors only now and then, here are tips to ensure she stays safe.

- **Provide plenty of fresh water** and make sure she has a shaded place to take a nap and stay cool.
- **Check his paws often**, as tar and grit can become embedded between the pads.
- **Make sure your dog has a collar and tag** with your name and address on in case he/she gets lost.

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