

Hot Weather Safety Tips and DIY Ideas for Keeping Pets Cool

Dogs and cats can become dehydrated quickly, so give them plenty of fresh water when it's hot, and be sure to replace the water frequently.

DIY Tip: On particularly hot days, add ice to water bowls, and give your pets frozen treats like dog ice cream, frozen broth popsicles, chilled cucumbers or frozen food toys to keep them cool and occupied while indoors.

In extreme heat, try to save the longer walks for the coolest parts of the day, i.e. early in the morning or late at night.

Make sure your pets have a shady place to escape the sun if they are outside, be careful not to over-exercise them, and keep them indoors when it's extremely hot.

DIY Tip: Let your pets dig into dirt, which provides them with a cool place to relax, and utilize kiddie pools and sprinklers for outdoor activities.

Pet owners should never leave their animals unattended in a parked vehicle. Parked cars, even with windows open, become very hot in a short amount of time, and this can lead to heatstroke or death. On an 85-degree day, it takes only 10 minutes for the inside of your car to reach 102 degrees, even with the windows cracked an inch or two; and in 30 minutes, the inside of a locked car can reach 120 degrees.

Know the symptoms of overheating in pets. These can include an increased heart rate, drooling, excessive panting or difficulty breathing, mild weakness, seizures and an elevated body temperature (over 104 degrees). Make sure your pet has access to cool surfaces like tiled floors.

DIY Tip: Provide your pets with wet, cool towels to lie on, or sponge cold water on their feet, abdomen and under their legs. You can also utilize cooling collars, vests or frozen water bottles for them to lie with.

Elderly, overweight, and pets with heart or lung diseases are more susceptible to heatstroke. Pets with short muzzles like pugs, bulldogs and Persian cats become overheated because they cannot effectively pant. These pets should be kept in air conditioning to stay cool.

DIY Tip: If air conditioning is unavailable, provide a wet, cool towel for your pets to lie on, or place a fan in front of a pan of ice to generate cooler air.

Keep your pets properly groomed, and brush them regularly to keep them cool. **Never shave your dog, though: The layers of dogs' coats protect them from overheating and sunburn.** Remember that light-coated dogs can get sunburn, so it's important to keep them out of sun during the day or use pet friendly sunscreen (especially on the face and ears).

When the temperature is very high, **don't let your dog linger on hot asphalt.**

DIY Tip: Use dog booties if there is a need for walking on hot surfaces, or walk your pets in grass as opposed to pavement whenever possible.

Beware of "High Rise Syndrome." Pet owners are urged to place screens in their windows to prevent their pets from falling out—incidents commonly referred to as "high-rise syndrome." These types of falls can result in serious injuries or even death.



If you see an animal at risk in extreme temperatures, please call 311 or 911 for a crime in progress in NYC, or visit [aspca.org](https://www.aspca.org) to learn how to report animal cruelty outside of NYC.