

## Tips for keeping your pet cool during the summer.

It is hot outside. What do humans do? We take off those winter coats and heavy clothing, we stay in the cool air conditioned building, we head to the pool or lake for a swim, and we drink lots of cool water.

Seems obvious, right? As responsible pet owners, we know to [not leave our pets in cars](#) (even on mildly warm days!) or stuck out in the sun without access to shade. But what about more "in-depth" tips to keep our pets as cool and comfortable as possible for those times we must leave our pets as we go to work or other appointments?

Just having shade and a bowl of water may not be enough in a severe heat wave. When the ambient temperature is very warm, the water dish doesn't have to be in the sun to heat the water up enough were a pet will not drink it. Dogs and cats vary in their sense of taste/temperature, but fresh cool water is of course, the top choice for all animals.

### A summer heat scenario:

A dog overheating due to excitement or stress (barking, jumping), knocking over the water dish, getting trapped somewhere trying to escape thunder, etc. -- these are all scenarios that can happen when animals are acting unpredictably due to fright or stress.

Here are some quick tips to ensure that your pet stays cool this summer and avoids any possible emergency situations, such as heatstroke.

- **Water** Keep water in the shade and make sure it is [fresh every day](#). Secure the water dish to avoid an accidental spill. If possible, have fresh "on demand" water available, such as a hose bib waterer. Compare prices: [automatic pet water bowls](#).
- **A refreshing cool down** A "bath" without soap. Use a garden hose to wet down your dog or use a cool, very wet towel to wet down your dog or cat for evaporative cooling. Once animals figure this out, many enjoy this quick water cool down. I do this often for my Ridgebacks love it. Caution is advised for very hot or overheated pets - do not use ice cold water or ice. Use cool water.
- **Poolside** For animals that love the water, an inexpensive child's pool or poly rubber water trough make excellent "on demand" swimming pools for pets. *Caution is advised* - make sure that the pets are able to use the pool without risk of [drowning](#) (puppies, children). I have lost a dog to drowning in my pool. Teach your dogs where the steps are located. Put a flag
- **A sprinkle a day** Setting up a sprinkler, mister, or drip hose works well for some animals. This keeps the water running and cool, allowing for a fresh water source on demand. Observe your pet to see how they react to a sprinkler or running water though; before assuming everything is fine.
- **Ouch - hot feet alert** If you will be walking with your pet, remember that while paw pads are "tough" they are also sensitive, and [can be burned](#) while walking on hot pavement and tar. If possible, walk on grass or dirt, and check your pet's paw pads to make sure there isn't any redness or pain.
- **Good grooming** is important for your pet's [health and comfort](#). Speak with a groomer or veterinarian to find out what is best for your pet. A full shave may not be the answer, depending on your pet's coat/breed, and caution is advised for white and light-skinned pets getting [sunburned](#).
- **Made in the shade** If your pet must be outside, make sure that shade is available at *all times*. While home, be sure to check the area your pet is in - as the sun changes, is the shade still readily available?
- **Loud summer noises** If hot summer [thunderstorms or fireworks](#) are a possibility in your area, is your pet safe? If possible, arrange to have a friend or neighbor check on your pet during extreme weather (heat and storm activity) to make sure that your pet hasn't done anything out of the ordinary due to stress or fear that could risk injury or heat-related problems.

With some forethought and planning, we can keep our pets cool during the summer heat and avoid heat-related emergencies, such as [heatstroke](#). Stay cool.