



Winter Weather Tips for Pets

Protecting pets from the cold, wind, and rain can prevent hypothermia, and other weather-related issues.

Know Your Dog's Limits

Some dogs are more susceptible to the cold than others. Short-coated, thin, elderly, or very young dogs get cold more quickly. If your dog enjoys being outdoors, consider outfitting them with a sweater or coat to keep them warm. Hypothermia and frostbite pose major risks to dogs in winter, so remember, if it is too cold for you, it is probably too cold for your dog.

Check Under the Hood

Cats often sleep in the wheel wells of cars during the winter months to keep warm. Prevent injuries by checking under your vehicle or honking the horn before starting your car. This will give your cat a chance to escape before the car starts.

Wipe Their Paws

During winter walks, your dog's paws can pick up all kinds of chemicals like salt, antifreeze, and de-icers. Put booties on their paws or be sure to wipe off their paws when you return from walks to prevent them from licking it off and becoming sick. And while wiping off your dog's paws, check for signs of injury, such as cracked or bleeding paws.

Use A Leash

Snowfall can disguise recognizable scents that would normally help your pet find their way home. During the winter, keep your dogs leashed on walks and, just in case you are separated from your pets, make sure their collars have up-to-date contact information and they are microchipped.

Leave Them Home

We know you love taking your dog's everywhere with you, but cold cars are every bit as life threatening as summer heat. Only take your pets in the car when necessary, and never leave them unattended.

Be Seen

Because of the longer winter nights, many of us are forced to walk our dogs in the dark. Keep yourself and your dog safe by wearing reflective gear.

Give Them Shelter

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If your pets live outdoors primarily, bring them indoors during freezing temperatures, and make sure they have a dry, draft-free shelter that is large enough to allow them to sit and lay down comfortably, but small enough to conserve body heat. Ideally, the floor should be raised above the ground, and the doorway covered to provide a wind block.

Plastic Is Better Than Metal

Pets who spend a lot of time outside need more food and water to replace energy lost from trying to stay warm. It's better to use plastic dishes instead of metal as your pets' tongue can become frozen to metal.

Be Prepared

Winter weather can be extreme. Make sure you have emergency plans that include your pets. Keep an emergency kit with enough food and water to last your pets at least five days. You may never need it, but if you do, you will be thankful you planned ahead!



Excerpts and graphic from Heart of the Rockies Radio-Winter Weather Tips to Keep Your Pets Safe and Healthy

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