



Keeping Your Four-Legged Friends Cool This Summer

How to keep your pet cool in hot weather:

- Keep your pet groomed to remove any shedding fur. You could consider giving your dog a summer trim. However, before doing so it may be worth speaking with your vet or groomer to check if your dog's coat is heating them up or keeping them cool. Some dogs fur is actually designed to protect them from the sun and can help to keep them cool
- Pet safe sun cream for exposed areas of skin
- Exercise earlier or later in the day when the weather is cooler
- Constant access to fresh water
- Damp towels to lie on or cooling mats
- Stick to the shade
- Check temperature of tarmac before walking dogs. If it is too hot for your hand it is too hot for their paws
- Ice cubes in water bowl
- Keep cages, runs or hutches out of direct sunlight and provide shaded areas in their enclosures
- A dip in a pool is a good way of keeping cool but never assume your dog is a competent swimmer. Keep a close eye on them in the water even if it's just a paddling pool



Check sheds, greenhouses and summerhouses for cats before closing them. If they were to become trapped in one of these buildings they could get too hot and become dehydrated.

Never leave dogs in cars, conservatories, outbuildings or caravans on a warm day (even if only for a short while).

Keep your dog or cat on a year round preventative against fleas and ticks as they are more prevalent during the summer months.

Overweight, brachycephalic (flat faced), young, elderly, giant breed and long-haired dogs are most at risk of heat stroke.

Heatstroke

Heatstroke is serious and can progress quickly so the quicker your pet is cooled down and treated by a vet, the better their chance of a full recovery.

To cool your pet down make sure you move them to a shaded area and allow them to drink cool water (not freezing cold). Pour water over them - the most effective temperature is around 15-16°C. You can also place cool wet towels under your dog but never over – towels placed on top can trap the heat under the material.

Signs of Heatstroke

Excessive panting

Foaming at the mouth

Confusion

Diarrhoea

Shaking

Seizures

Collapse

If you think your pet may have heatstroke call and speak with us immediately on **01566 772211**.

Taking Your Pet on Holiday

Thinking of taking your pet away with you this summer? Before you decide, you may need to ask yourself a couple of tough questions.

Firstly, is your holiday destination actually suitable for your pet? If your pet is very young, or elderly, pregnant, poorly, or generally anxious it may be much better for them to stay in a cattery or kennels, or ideally in their own home. There are lots of professional pet-sitters who will either look after your pets at their house or come and look after them in your home – allowing their environment and routine to stay the same.

Next, you should consider the activities you are planning and whether they are suitable for your pet? Many tourist attractions are not pet-friendly, and a lot of the ones that are will still be a problem if it's particularly hot or crowded. A day on the beach sounds lovely but imagine doing it in a fur coat! Similarly, please don't consider leaving your pets in the car – heat stroke happens faster than you think and is often fatal.



Finally, what method of transport are you going to be using and is your pet familiar with it? If this is going to be new to them, you may need to introduce travelling to your pet gradually and some transport companies have specific rules (use of muzzles or travel crates) so check this out fully before you travel.

If you've got this far and your pet is still coming with you, great! Here are our top tips for making sure you all enjoy your well-earned break.

Make sure you pack the basics:

- Have a water bowl and lots of water with you in case your travel plans are delayed. Make sure you have poo bags or litter trays available for the journey, and a clean-up kit in case of accidents.
- Items such as tie-up stakes, harnesses and long leads and crates are essential to help keep your pet safe.
- Tick hooks, sun cream, a first aid kit and, if your pet is on any medication, make sure you have enough for your trip.
- If your pet suffers from travel sickness, medication is available. Support such as pheromone collars, sprays and diffusers, herbal remedies and nutraceuticals can also be really useful to help keep your pet calm and relaxed. Just speak to your vet for further advice

Some consistency can really help your pet settle into unfamiliar surroundings so bringing your pet's own bed, and other items of theirs from home will really help. It's worthwhile keeping their diet the same, to avoid digestive upset, so make sure you bring enough food for them, or check where you will be able to buy it locally Remember that food storage facilities in some accommodation, such as tents and caravans, may be much more easily accessed by your pet than at home!

Research your destination fully beforehand. Are there other animals at your destination - such as other people's pets or livestock? Is there an enclosed area outside where they can be allowed out, or will you need to be with them?

Make sure your pet's microchip details are up to date and that any collar tags include a mobile contact number as you won't be at your home address. Some microchipping companies will also store a temporary holiday address on their system for you.

Find out where the nearest veterinary practice is and have the number readily available, in case of emergency. Cases of sand impaction, saltwater poisoning, heat stroke and cliff falls are unfortunately common in veterinary practices during the holiday season.

With a few simple measures put in place, your pets can have lots of fun exploring somewhere new with you so keep them safe and enjoy your holiday together.

