

Have You “Winterized” Your Dog?

Cold weather brings its own safety and health concerns for both people and dogs. As a responsible dog owner, it is important to pay attention to your dog’s well-being during the winter. Remember the following precautions to help keep your pet comfortable, healthy, and safe all season.

Provide Plenty of Fresh Water



Your dog is just as likely to get dehydrated in the winter as in the summer. Snow is not a satisfactory substitute for water.



Provide Plenty of Food

Feed your dog additional calories if it spends a lot of time outdoors or is a working animal. It takes more energy in the winter to keep body temperature regulated, so additional calories are necessary.

Keep Your Dog’s Paws Dry

Rinse your dog’s feet and dry them completely after a walk. This helps avoid tiny cuts and cracked pads. A little petroleum jelly may soften the pads and prevent further cracking.

Groom Your Dog Regularly



Your dog needs a well-groomed coat to keep properly insulated. Towel or blow-dry your dog if it gets wet from rain or snow.



Keep Your Dog Warm, Dry, and Away From Drafts



Adequate shelter is a necessity. Tiles and uncarpeted areas may become extremely cold. Place blankets and pads on floors in these areas.



Watch Out for Winter Hazards

Cold: Don’t leave your dog outside for long periods of time. Windchill makes days colder than actual temperature readings, and dogs are susceptible to frostbite on their ears, tails, and feet.

Ice and Snow: Be extra careful when walking or playing with your dog outside. Your dog could slip or jump in a frozen lake, river, or pond and get seriously injured. Snow can muffle scents, and your dog can easily get lost.



Carbon Monoxide: Don’t leave your dog alone in a car. It gets too cold, and carbon monoxide from an engine left running is dangerous.

Antifreeze: Although it smells and tastes good to your dog, antifreeze is highly poisonous and can be lethal.