

Cold Weather Pet Care Tips

Keep your cat inside.

Outdoors, cats can freeze, become lost or be stolen, injured or killed. Cats who are allowed to stray are exposed to fatal infectious diseases, including rabies.

Never let your dog off the leash on snow or ice,

especially during a snowstorm--dogs can lose their scent and easily become lost. More dogs are lost during the winter than during any other season, so make sure they always wear I.D. tags.

Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather.

A car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, holding in the cold. The animal can freeze to death. If your dog is sensitive to the cold due to age, illness or breed type, take him outdoors only to relieve himself.

Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs and stomach

when he comes in out of the sleet, snow or ice. He can ingest salt, antifreeze or other chemicals while licking his paws, and his paw pads may also bleed from snow or encrusted ice.

Own a short-haired breed?

Consider getting him a coat or sweater with a high collar or turtleneck that covers the dog from the base of the tail on top to the belly underneath. While this may seem like a luxury, it is a necessity for many dogs.

Puppies do not tolerate the cold as well as adult dogs

and may be difficult to housebreak during the winter. If necessary, paper train your puppy inside if he appears to be sensitive to the weather.

Like coolant, antifreeze is a lethal poison for dogs

and cats. Be sure to thoroughly clean up any spills from your vehicle, and consider using products that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol.

Never shave your dog down to the skin in winter.

Leave the coat longer for more warmth. When you bathe your dog, completely dry him before taking him out for a walk.

Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep

away from all drafts and off the floor, such as in a dog or cat bed with a warm blanket or pillow in it.

*Tips provided by the ASPCA



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