

Naughty or Nice?



Five Tips to Help Your Dog

Mind His Manners at Holiday Gatherings

The holidays are a time for treasured family gathering. For pet parents, this includes those members with four legs and fur. While you might be thrilled with the idea of decking the halls with family, friends and Fido this year, Fido may not be so enthusiastic. Much to the dismay of many pet parents, the holiday season can create the perfect recipe for misbehavior in pets. Increased noise, unfamiliar people, and a flurry of out-of-routine activities can confuse and stress pets, which can cause them to act out, even if they're usually well-behaved.

If you'd like to ensure that your well-planned holiday isn't ruined when your pet suddenly begins stealing from the table, raiding the trash, begging, jumping or whining, check out our list of tips and tricks for curbing bad holiday behavior.

Tire Your Pet Out

A tired dog is a good dog. In all the hustle and bustle of prepping for a holiday party, it's easy to forget how important exercise is for your dog. A bored and restless pooch will find a way to entertain himself and release pent-up energy—naughty or otherwise. During the holiday season, bump long walks or intense play sessions with your dog up to the top of your to-do list. On the day of your party, set aside time before your guests arrive to exercise your dog so that he gets everything out of his system, and is far less likely to beg, bark, or get himself into trouble.

Keep Him Busy

Keep an ample supply of toys, treats or bones you know your dog enjoys on hand. Toys that wear your dog out physically are great, but toys that keep his mind busy and wear him out mentally, like puzzles and food dispensing toys are good choices as well. A tip: if your dog loves his Kong toys, try stuffing one or two of them with peanut butter and then freezing them. This will keep your pooch busy for a while!

Get Back to Good Behavior Basics

It's always wise to reinforce and practice good behaviors once in a while. This is especially true during the holiday season. Stock up on reward treats, then give your dog a refresher course on the basic commands (sit, stay, wait, leave it and the all-important "drop it.") ASAP. Make sure to have treats handy during parties to reward him for acting on his best behavior.

("Naughty or Nice?" cont.)

Have a Back-Up Plan

With all the excitement of holiday preparations and festivities, even the most well-behaved of dogs can lapse on their manners from time to time. It's important to have a plan B in case your dog just can't curb his enthusiasm and his behavior gets out of hand. Have a place ready to distance your dog from the action. Place him in a crate, behind a baby gate in a separate room or on a tether out of reach of guests and tables. If you do have to separate your dog, give him something really special to keep him occupied, such as a favorite toy or a Kong stuffed with a mixture of soft dog food mixed with doggy-safe holiday fare, such as mashed potatoes or turkey.

Assign Doggie Duty

During the hustle and bustle a holiday party, it's important that your dog is properly supervised. Recruit a trusted fellow dog lover and assign them the task of helping you keep an eye on your four-legged co-host. They can help keep his behavior in check, curtail any overly generous food-giving guests, and take him out for potty breaks when necessary.

With a little preparation and practice and a lot of consistency, your dog will impress your guests with his good manners. He may even earn himself a spot on Santa's "nice" list, and find a brand new Kong under the tree this year!

TripsWithPets.com is the #1 online resource for pet travel. Named best pet travel site by Consumer Reports, TripsWithPets.com's mission is to offer resources that ensure pets are welcome, happy, and safe while traveling. The website features a directory of pet friendly hotels and accommodations across the United States and Canada, as well as airline & car rental pet policies; pet friendly restaurants, beaches, and events; a user-friendly route search option; pet travel tips; pet travel supplies; and other pet travel resources. □



Is Your Pet Winterized?

More Tips for Keeping Your Pet Warm and Safe During Cold Weather

So you’ve winterized your car, your house, and your lawn. But what about your pet? It may sound amusing at first, but with winter already bringing Arctic winds and tumbling temperatures this year—not to mention an abundance of snow, sleet and freezing rain—it’s important that you take the time to prepare your pet adequately for the season. Here are some winter threats that lurk around, as well as tips on how to keep your pet safe.

Toxic Winter Products

Anti-Freeze: Never, ever leave automotive antifreeze where your pet can access it, and make sure you clean up any spills quickly and thoroughly. This highly toxic, yellowish green contains ethylene glycol, which is a powerful toxin that can quickly damage your pet’s kidneys. A single lick of this fluid can pose serious danger to the health of your pet and, unfortunately, it has a smell and flavor that pets can find appealing. If you suspect that your dog or cat has come into contact with or ingested anti-freeze, take them immediately to the vet. This is a life-threatening emergency.

Windshield Cleaner: This cleaner is less toxic than antifreeze, but it’s still a serious threat to your pet. Most varieties contain methanol, which can cause severe nervous system depression in pets, which may result in drooling, vomiting, and instability.

Ice Melt Products: For most people who live in cold climates, treating walkways, driveways, and outdoor steps with rock salt or other ice melt products de rigueur during winter months. It may seem harmless enough—it’s just salt after all, right?

Unfortunately, these products can cause everything from gastrointestinal tract irritation to depression, weakness, seizures and cardiac problems. Keep in mind that even if your pet never ingests ice melt products, walking on treated areas can dry out and irritate your pet’s paws. Dry paws can lead to cracking and discomfort and creates the possibility of infection.

Pet safe ice melt products are available. However, it’s impossible to control what other people put on their sidewalks. To keep your pet safe and comfortable, gently wash and dry off his paws and his belly at the end of each walk and when you enter the car during travel. Boots can prevent some irritation but it’s hard to find varieties that truly stay on his feet. Coating your dog’s paws with pet paw wax may be your best option for a preventative measure.

Indoor Dangers

Heating Elements: Pets naturally seek out warm, cozy places during winter and they’re often drawn to space heaters, heat lamps and fireplaces. These heat sources can pose dangers to your pets, so it’s important to monitor them. Stray hairs can ignite quickly, so keep all fluffy tails from exposure to heat lamps and space heaters.

Protect your pet from the open flames and sparks of a fireplace by using a safety screen or glass.

Outdoor Threats

The Elements: Your pet isn’t totally protected from winter’s chill just because he has fur. Short-haired breeds that live in cold climates may be in need of protective clothing when spending time outdoors.

Keep a close eye on your pet while outdoors in cold weather, and bring them indoors if they are exhibiting signs of being too cold. Monitor your pet closely to avoid overexposure, which can lead to hypothermia—a life-threatening condition. Signs of hypothermia include lethargy, weakness, muscle stiffness, difficulty breathing, and fixed and dilated pupils. Time outdoors during particularly harsh cold snaps should be limited for all breeds.

Never leave your pet unattended in freezing cold car. Once you shut off your car’s heater, the temperature drops far more rapidly than you might think.

Bodies of Water: Romping through the snow off-leash is a favorite winter pastime for many dogs. However, before you remove the leash, it’s important to know the area in which your dog is playing to ensure that he doesn’t inadvertently fall into an unseen body of water.

Even seemingly frozen bodies of water can pose threats. Every year there are incidents in which dogs fall through thin ice and injure themselves, or worse—incidents which could easily have been prevented.

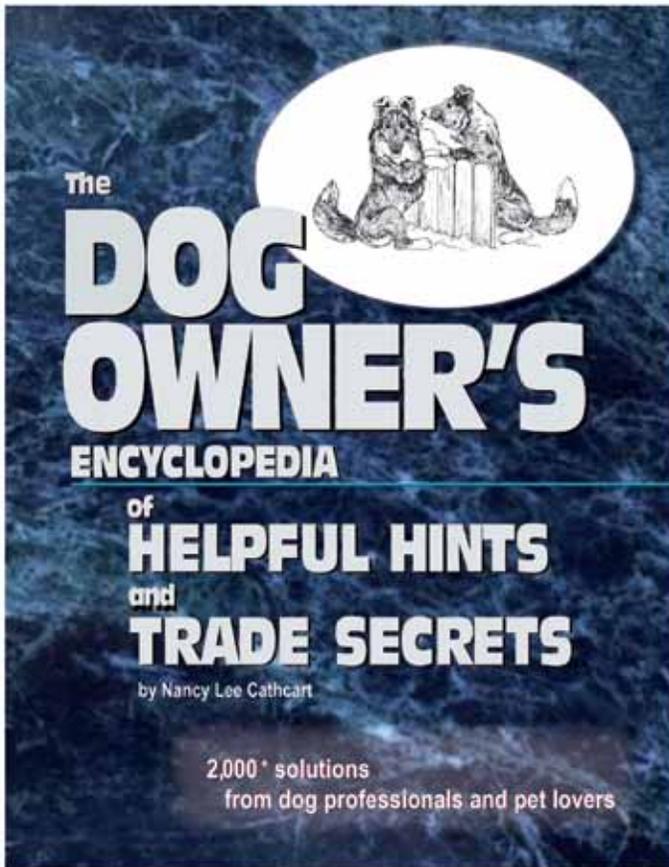
Car Engines: Cats who roam outdoors often seek shelter from the cold by curling up in the warmth of a recently-turned off car engine. Turning your car on while a cat is snuggled up on your engine is obviously something you never want to have happen. To alert any cat that may be near your car engine, bang on your hood a few times before getting in and starting your car.

Of course, you could always avoid winter threats by traveling south to a warmer climate! If you plan to escape winter’s chill by traveling with your pet, be sure to plan ahead. If traveling by plane, check with your carrier to determine their airline pet policies. If traveling by car, be sure to take all the necessary steps for a safe, happy and fun winter road trip, including securing pet friendly hotels & accommodations along your travel route!

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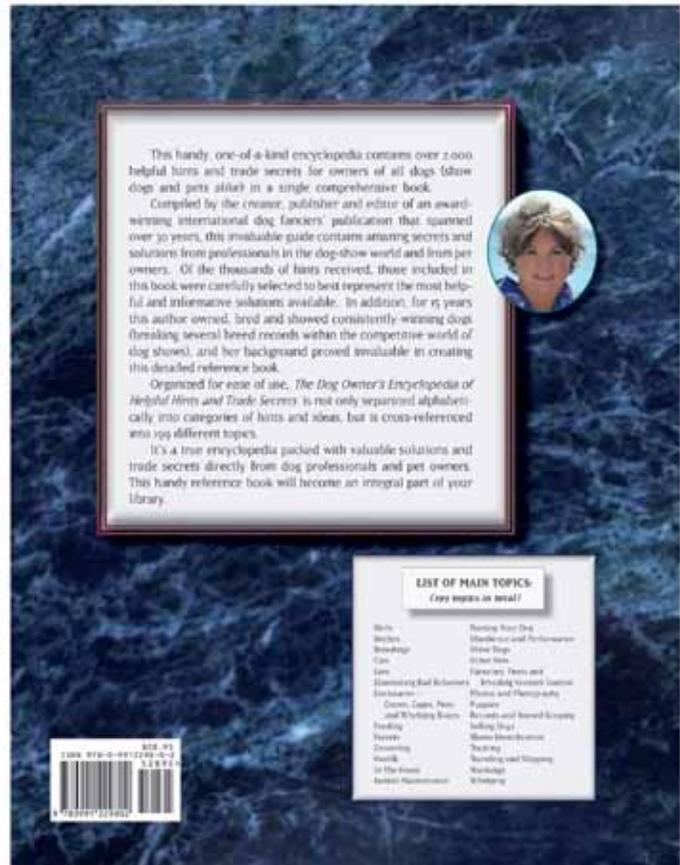


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These Conditions Require Immediate Attention!

The Emergency Veterinary Clinic of Cincinnati compiled this list of pet health emergencies. If the animal has any of the following symptoms, call your local emergency care facility and tell the receptionist that you are bringing in a dog or cat that has:

- **Difficulty breathing** —
 - noisy respiration,
 - blue tongue,
 - gasping for breath.
- **Bleeding that does not stop from any part of the body** — apply pressure with a clean cloth and go!
- **Bloated or distended abdomen or swollen or painful abdomen with or without vomiting.**
- **Inability to urinate or move bowels but continues to try or has bloody stool or urine or painful defecation or urination.**
- **Heatstroke** —
 - heavy panting,
 - extreme weakness,
 - body temperature about 104 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Inability to deliver puppies or kittens, labor contractions for longer than one hour or more than 15 minutes of labor with the fetus or membrane showing.**
- **Loss of balance or consciousness or seizure**, including —
 - tremors,
 - coma,
 - staggering,
 - convulsions,
 - sudden blindness,
 - tilting of the head,
- biting at imaginary objects,
- sudden changes in disposition such as unusual withdrawal or out-of-character aggressiveness.
- **Pain, severe or continuous.**
- **Major trauma, injury, or shock** from —
 - falls,
 - vehicle accidents,
 - wounds,
 - cuts,
 - broken bones.
- **Shows signs of:**
 - weakness,
 - collapse,
 - shallow breathing,
 - rapid heartbeat,
 - bewildered appearance,
 - dilated pupils.
- **Ingested poison;** bring the container or the commercial or chemical name of the product or a list of ingredients if you have it.
- **Penetrating wounds anyplace**, but especially in the chest or abdomen.
- **Vomiting or diarrhea with blood or violent episodes.**
- **Lameness and cannot bear any weight on the leg.**
- **Any other signs that look serious**, such as:
 - eye problems,
 - severe itching with self-mutilation,
 - severe hives

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— Nancy Lee

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