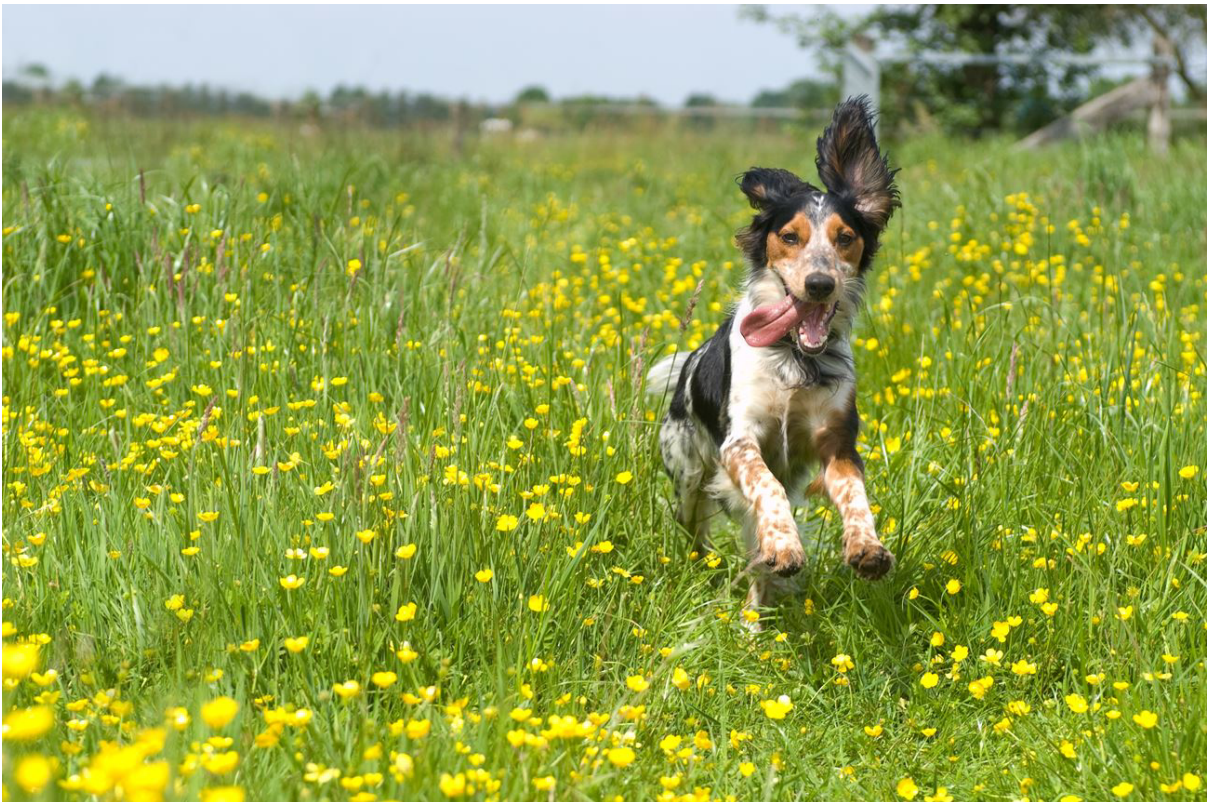


Tips to Keep Your Pet Safe in Summers

Summertime means loads of outdoor fun with your pets. Keep your pet cool in the warm weather with these tips!

By Raksha Kulkarni

Summer is the best time to explore, go on adventures, and bond with your pets. But, the heat can be harmful in many ways for our furry companions. There are higher risks of infections, skin burns, or even a heat stroke. In these few recent years, there has been a substantial increase in the temperatures. The weather is getting unbearable for humans. Imagine how difficult it can get for our pets. Precaution is always better! Know that there are a few breeds that are more susceptible to overheating. Short-nosed breeds like pugs or bulldogs, double-coat breeds, older, and obese dogs are less tolerant of heat. In such cases, extra care has to be taken.



Take Your Pet to the Vet

Regular check-ups should always be done. But, don't forget to go for one when it starts getting warm. Ask the vet for medicines that will protect your pet from heartworms, fleas, and ticks. Though these problems persist year long, they have a

higher chance in summers. Pets get lots of outdoor time which may attract such health problems. Also, consult with your vet if your pet needs a pet-approved sunscreen.

NEVER Leave Your Pet in the Car

Every single year, many pets suffer when they are left in an overheated parked car. A parked car will overheat in just a few minutes and no one can handle that, not even us humans.

Leave Your Pets Home

Taking your pets out on a hot sunny day might have serious effects like a heatstroke. Dogs cool themselves by panting which is actually exchanging their warm body temperature with the cooler air around. But, this won't work if the atmosphere itself is hot. Instead of taking your pet outside, leave it home. While your pet stays home, keep the curtains closed to reduce heating and leave the air conditioning on a comfortable and conservative setting. If your pets are in your garden, make sure there's enough shade for them.

Keep Water Bowls Easily Accessible

An animal loses moisture faster than a human does. Keep fresh and cool water available for your pets always. You may also add ice to keep it chilled for a longer time. Even when you're travelling with your pet, carry a travel bowl with you. Also, you can get or make frozen treats for your pets. This will cool them down and will also keep them busy for some time. If it's possible, you can also keep a bigger tub outside, in which your pet can take a dip once in a while.

Change Exercise Schedules

Take them out for a walk early in the morning and late at night. Regardless of the timings; watch out for signs like frantic panting, glassy eyes, and increased drooling. These are signs of heat stress. You can also opt to exercise them indoors. Also, take care of their paws while you're out on a walk. You may think they always walk barefoot so why stress now. But do take care, specifically on surfaces like metal or asphalt which get scorching hot! If you think you can't walk barefoot, probably your dog also can't. You can also carry a water spray with you for their paws, just in case.

There are boots available in the market that you may buy if your dog is comfortable in them.

Groom Them Regularly

The catch is to make sure that their fur isn't shabby. Brush them regularly so that air circulation continues, keeping your pet cool. **DON'T shave your pet's coat.** Their skin needs protection from the harsh sun rays, and bug bites. You may just trim their coat.

Be Aware of the Outdoor Dangers

- While travelling, keep an eye on your pet when it roams freely in the grass. Most lawns are treated with pesticides in this season, which may cause rashes or skin problems in our pets. Take your pets to known places.
- Toxic mushrooms and other plants may grow in your own yard. Make sure to remove them.
- Post play, always check your pet's fur for any foxtails and such. They stick in the paws and fur.
- In this season, you may notice antifreeze leaking from cars. This may happen yearlong but happens mostly in summers as cars overheat and then leak. Keep your pets away from them as that is toxic for them. Pets may go to lick them so be alert on walks.

Use Pet Life Vests

Some pets love swimming and cooling off in a pool in summers. But, never leave them unattended. Also, bathe your dog after a pool day to rinse off the chlorine and salt from its fur. You should also use a life vest for them if it's a lake or a deep water body.

If you suspect that your pet may have overheated; immediately keep a damp cloth on its belly, ears, and footpads. Don't use anything that is ice cold as that might put your pet in shock. Act fast, call your veterinary, and ask for further advice.

Last but not the least, always remember that they rely on us for their safety. If you're hot, your pet is definitely hot!