



Winter Tips For Pets

1. Just as arthritis can be more problematic for us when the temperature drops, so too does this apply to our animals. If your best buddy appears stiff first thing in the morning or is more tentative when navigating stairs or jumping up and down off the furniture, I encourage you to contact your veterinarian. These days, there are so many beneficial treatment options for soothing arthritis discomfort. For your pet's sake, make the effort to learn more about them.
2. When the temperature drops, outdoor kitties like to snuggle up against car engines for extra warmth. Be sure to provide plenty of notice before you start up your engine lest a "kitty squatter" sustain serious injury as a result of moving auto parts. Vocalize and tap the hood a few times. Better yet, lift the hood to alert any slumbering guests of your intentions.
3. Antifreeze is terribly toxic for dogs and cats. Even a few licks of the stuff can cause kidney failure and severe neurological symptoms, usually resulting in death. Unfortunately, most antifreeze products have a sweet flavor making them appealing to dogs. Cats are too discriminating to voluntarily taste the stuff, but should they step in antifreeze, they will ingest enough to be toxic during their grooming process. Please prevent your pets from having any access to antifreeze by checking under your vehicles for leaks and storing antifreeze containers in a safe place.
4. Wintertime is definitely dress-up time for dogs, when the clothing is functional rather than just adorable. Just like us, many dogs are more comfortable outside when wearing an extra layer. Smaller dogs in particular have difficulty maintaining a normal body temperature when exposed to freezing conditions. If the love of your canine life happens to be an arctic breed (Malamute, Husky, Samoyed), no need for canine clothing!
5. Regardless of season, all animals need access to water round-the-clock. If your pet is reliant on an outdoor water bowl, strategize a way to prevent the water from freezing. Water bowl heaters work well. Additionally moving water is more resistant to freezing- consider creating a little "drinking fountain" for your pets.
6. Sure the weather is cold, but your dogs still need plenty of exercise for their physical as well as their psychological well being. Besides, there's nothing quite like the feeling of relaxing by the fire with a content and tired dog at your side!
7. I strongly encourage having dogs and cats live indoors. If your living situation absolutely prevents this, and there are no other viable alternatives, please provide your pet with an enclosed shelter that is warmed by a heating device and contains plenty of clean, dry bedding. Also, remember that your pet needs just as much attention from you in frigid temperatures as during the warmer seasons.
8. 'Tis the time of year when we humans tend to overindulge, eating all kinds of things that perhaps we shouldn't. Don't allow your pets to become a victim of this holiday spirit. In addition to adding unwanted and unhealthy pounds, eating rich and fatty foods predisposes them to gastrointestinal upset and pancreatitis either of which could land your four-legged family member in the hospital for several days (not to mention create some significant rug-cleaning expenses for you).