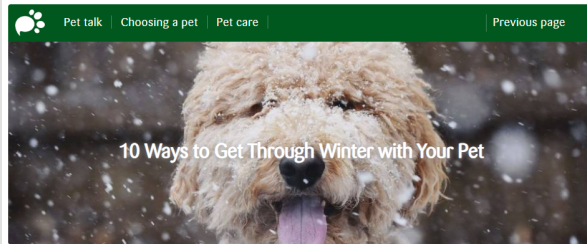


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Home Pet Talk Seasonal 10 Tips To Keep Your Pet Warm During Winter



Similarly to the way we adapt our wardrobes, activities and behaviours for the winter, it's important to ensure that the way we care for our pets also changes. From when we walk them to helpful quick tips, read on to find out how to have a happy and safe season.



1. Make sure your pet stays warm at night

Most cats love a [radiator bed](#) or an [igloo bed](#), while dogs will appreciate a cosy [heated bed](#) or a few extra blankets to snuggle in to. Whichever style your pet prefers, wash their bedding regularly at 30°C, as fleas thrive in a centrally heated home and can be very active in the winter months.

2. Protect your small furries

Outdoor pets are vulnerable to cold and damp, so it's best to try and bring rabbits and guinea pig hutches inside as soon as temperatures drop – a well ventilated shed, unused garage or spacious conservatory is ideal. If that isn't possible, raise their hutch slightly off the ground to avoid damp and use a [thermal hutch cover](#). In severe or extreme weather conditions additional protection may be required. Be sure to regularly check the temperature of both your pets and their hutch to prevent overheating or a dangerous drop in temperature. A few little extras, try adding extra straw for your pets to snuggle up in, lots of hay for them to munch on and position their hutches out of the path of prevailing winds.

3. Remember to weigh your pets regularly

Thick winter coats can disguise weight loss than can mean your pet isn't well, or weight gain that can be a sign that your pet isn't getting enough exercise. Try not to be too generous with extra treats – especially festive human food – because your pet is likely to be less active in winter.

4. Watch out for salty paws

The rock salt on icy roads and pavements can make your dog's paws and nose sting when walking and snuffling along the ground. Always rinse your dog's paws with warm water after winter walks, dry them well then soothe any cracks with a pet-friendly paw balm. Trimming the hair around your dog's paw will also prevent ice balls forming in snowy weather.

5. Be seen in the dark

Make sure you and your dog are visible when walking in the dark – reflective leads, collars and harnesses and glow in the dark dog balls are simple ways to make winter walks safe. Explore our [reflective range](#) to find the perfect product for you and your pet.

6. Keep pets away from antifreeze

Cats and dogs love the smell and taste of antifreeze, but it's highly toxic – just 5ml of antifreeze can kill a cat, according to Cats Protection, so keep it out of reach and mop up any spills straight away.



7. Top up the litter tray

Even cats that go to the toilet outdoors may prefer to use an indoor litter tray in very cold weather. Or provide an outdoor tray of sand, cat litter or loose earth near the back door, in case the soil freezes.

8. Check water bottles and fish ponds

Don't let water supplies freeze over. Top up outdoor bowls of drinking water with hot water and use a thermal cover on small furry pets' water bottles. Fish ponds can freeze too – float a plastic football on the surface (a ping-pong ball will do the same trick in a birdbath), and never break the ice with force as that could shock or even kill your fish.

9. Invest in dog clothing

Young dogs, small or toy breeds, and closely clipped breeds may feel the cold more than usual. So keep them cosy in a [knitted doggy jumper](#), [a comfy hoodie](#) or [smart quilted coat](#).

10. Don't let pets overheat

Your fish tanks, reptile vivariums, bird cages or hamster homes should already be installed away from radiators. Elderly or overweight dogs can overheat in a very hot room, and flat-nosed (brachycephalic breeds) need special care because they find it harder to pant, which is how a dog normally regulates its body temperature.

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