



FEATURE

an expert's guide

to a safe & fun Summer for your pets amid Australia's extreme weather

With Australians bracing for what could be one of the most scorching summers on record, Petstock, the nation's foremost pet care retailer, is fervently urging pet owners to take proactive measures to ensure the safety and well-being of their beloved four-legged companions. As the mercury soars and the presence of natural disasters looms, it is imperative to have a well-thought-out plan in place to shield our pets.

This season is projected to witness maximum temperatures which are at least three times more likely to be unusually high across most of Australia.¹ As the temperature continues to climb, it becomes paramount to safeguard our pets, especially when it surpasses 28° C. Pets, like dogs, can struggle to naturally regulate their body temperature through panting, increasing the risk of heatstroke.²

Petstock Vet Dr. Nick Emerton, shares his expert insights and valuable precautions that pet owners should bear in mind during this sweltering and disaster-prone season:

Beat the heat

- **Shade and Hydration:** Ensure your pets have access to cool, shaded spots and a constant supply of clean, refreshing water. The sun can be relentless, but with the right shade and hydration, your pets can stay cool and content. Tip: Create a pet-friendly oasis with shade and a continuous flow of water. It's like your own pet paradise!
- **No Hot Cars:** On those scorching days when the mercury soars, never leave your pets alone in parked cars, even with windows cracked. It's simply not worth the risk. Keep your pets at home or bring them with you when it's safe. Tip: If it's too hot for you to sit in the car, it's definitely too hot for your furry companion.
- **Protect Those Paws:** Hot pavements can turn a leisurely stroll into a painful experience. Before venturing out, use your hand to gauge if the ground is too hot for your pets' paws. Opt for morning or evening walks when the pavement is cooler or stick to walking on the grass where it won't be as hot. Tip: Keep those paws pampered with protective paw balm. Your pets will thank you for the extra care!
- **Sun Safety:** Just like us, some pets can get sunburned. Ensure your pets' sensitive areas are shielded from harmful UV rays. With pet-friendly sunscreen, you can confidently protect them from the sun's intensity. Tip: Generously apply sunscreen to sensitive areas, and watch your pets bask in the sun safely.



- **Stay Cool:** Keep the summer fun going with a variety of ways for your pets to chill out. From cooling toys to wading pools and damp towels, there's an abundance of options to keep your pets entertained and refreshed.

Tip: Freeze pet-friendly toys for a refreshing and entertaining experience for your pets!

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Heat Related Illnesses in Pets

Summer can bring intense heat, and our furry friends are vulnerable to various heat-related illnesses. Here are some common conditions to watch for, and remember, immediate veterinary care is crucial:

- **Heat Stress and Heat Stroke:** Watch for signs such as excessive panting, rapid heart rate, drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, and elevated body temperature. If you notice any of these signs, seek veterinary care immediately
- **Dehydration:** Extreme dehydration signs can include sunken eyes, dry, sticky gums, lethargy, or weakness. If you are concerned your pet may be dehydrated, please call your veterinary clinic for advice.
- **Paw Pad Burns:** Signs include limping, red or blistered paw pads. Seek veterinary care promptly to assess and treat paw pad burns.
- **Sunburn:** Signs include red or pink skin, excessive itching, and peeling skin. Consult a veterinarian for severe sunburn or skin issues to prevent complications.

Protecting your Pets during times of Emergency

Australia's unpredictable weather demands preparedness. Ensure your pets are properly identified, create an emergency kit stocked with essentials, and practice your evacuation plan. Being informed can light your path to safety.

- **Prepare in Advance:** Develop an emergency plan that includes your pets and discuss it with your family. Keep it prominently displayed, such as on your refrigerator or near the front door.
- **Access to Water:** Ensure your pets have access to water that can last for several days, even if you are not home.
- **Backup Caregiver:** Choose a trusted neighbour, friend, or family member as a backup caregiver who has access to your home and is familiar with your pets.
- **Temporary Housing:** Identify potential temporary housing options for your pets, such as boarding facilities, animal care centres, or pet-friendly evacuation centres.
- **Identification:** Ensure your pets are properly identified with collars, tags, and microchips. Keep your contact details up to date. Tip: Tags can be engraved and personalised at any Petstock store and there's a huge range of designs and colours to choose from! Engraving is free when you purchase any pet ID tag from a Petstock store.
- **Emergency Kit:** Prepare a Pet Emergency Kit that includes food, water, bowls, medication, vaccination certificates, blankets, and essential supplies.
- **Evacuation Plan:** Determine evacuation routes and procedures for moving your pets safely. Practice the plan to ensure everyone knows what to do.
- **Pets remaining at home:** If you cannot take your pets with you during an emergency, provide secure shelter, ample water, and enough food for several days.

Remember, your pets rely on you for their safety and well-being, especially during challenging weather conditions and natural disasters.

By taking proactive measures and being prepared, you can ensure your pets stay safe and comfortable throughout the summer.

