



Mary Bloom ©AKC

Dachshund (Wirehaired)

MISSION STATEMENT

The American Kennel Club® is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its Registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Founded in 1884, the AKC® and its affiliated organizations advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion, advance canine health and well-being, work to protect the rights of all dog owners and promote responsible dog ownership.



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Winter Care for Canines



Courtesy of Majenkir Borzoi

Borzoi



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Winter Care for Canines • Winter Care for Canines

A dog's need for food, shelter and loving care increases during the cold winter months. Keep your dog safe and warm by following these guidelines.

- Don't leave your dog outside in the cold for long periods of time. Wind chill makes days colder than actual temperature readings. Be attentive to your dog's body temperature, and limit its time outdoors.
- Adequate shelter is a necessity. Keep your dog warm, dry and away from drafts. Tiles and uncarpeted areas may become extremely cold, so make sure to place blankets and pads on floors in these areas.
- Be extra careful when walking or playing with your dog near frozen lakes, rivers or ponds. Your dog could slip or jump in and get seriously injured.
- Groom your dog regularly. Your dog needs a well-groomed coat to keep properly insulated. Short- or coarse-haired dogs may get extra cold, so consider a sweater or coat. Long-haired dogs should have excess hair around the toes and foot pads trimmed to ease snow removal and cleaning. If you do the trimming, take care not to cut the pads or other delicate areas of the foot.
- Feed your dog additional calories if it spends a lot of time outdoors or is a working animal. It takes more energy in the winter to keep body temperature regulated, so additional calories are necessary.
- Towel or blow-dry your dog if it gets wet from rain or snow. It is important to dry and clean its paws, too. This helps avoid tiny cuts and cracked pads. A little petroleum jelly may soften the pads and prevent further cracking.
- Don't leave your dog alone in a car. If the car engine is left on, the carbon monoxide could endanger your dog's life. If the engine is off, the temperature in the car could get too cold.
- Antifreeze, which often collects on driveways and roadways, is highly poisonous. Although it smells and tastes good to your dog, it can be lethal.
- Rock salt, used to melt ice on sidewalks and roads, may irritate footpads. Be sure to rinse and dry your dog's feet after a walk.
- Provide plenty of fresh water at all times. Your dog is just as likely to get dehydrated in the winter as in the summer. Snow is not a satisfactory substitute for water.
- To prevent hypothermia and frostbite on your dog's ears, tail and feet, don't leave your dog outdoors for too long.
- Be very careful of supplemental heat sources. Fireplaces and portable heaters can severely burn your dog. Make sure all fireplaces have screens, and keep portable heaters out of reach.
- Like people, dogs seem to be more susceptible to illness in the winter. Take your dog to a veterinarian if you notice any signs of illness.

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Isabelle Francais ©AKC
Samoyed

THE HOLIDAYS

The winter season brings lots of fun holiday festivities, but pet-owners should keep in mind the following special precautions:

- Think twice when considering a dog as a gift. Though nothing tugs harder at heartstrings than a cute, cuddly puppy, every adorable bundle of fur is a lifetime responsibility. Dogs can live up to 20 years (depending on the breed), and it's crucial that you know the recipient truly wants and can care for the dog. This means providing plenty of exercise, training, veterinary care and lots of love and attention.

- Poinsettias, holly and mistletoe may make your dog sick if she chews on the leaves, flowers or berries. Place holiday plants out of your dog's reach.
- Review holiday gifts for dogs to make sure they are safe. Items such as plastic toys and small rawhide sticks may be dangerous.
- Remove holiday lights from lower branches of your tree, and watch out for electrical cords. Pets often try to chew them and may get shocked or electrocuted. Place wires out of their reach.

- Tree adornments, candles and other decorations can cause choking or severe intestinal problems, if swallowed. Avoid decorating your tree with strands of popcorn or other items that might tempt your dog's appetite. Tinsel and angel hair can lead to upset stomach and possible intestinal blockage if ingested.
- Avoid using glass ornaments. They break easily and may cut a dog's feet and mouth.
- Pets may find tree water tempting to drink. If you use preservatives in your tree's water, be sure they are pet-friendly.

- Though humans may enjoy cookies, chocolate, raisins and other sweets, these rich treats are dangerous for your canine. Chocolate contains theobromine, which can be harmful to dogs and sometimes fatal.
- While people may indulge in holiday libations, no dog should ever have alcohol.
- Not every guest at your holiday party, especially young children, may be familiar with your dog's habits. When entertaining, consider confining your dog securely in his crate or in one area of the house with a radio or TV on and soft lighting.
- The holiday season can be a stressful time for dogs. Try to keep a normal schedule during all the excitement.

Be sure your dog is registered with the AKC. Registration supports invaluable canine health research. It promotes responsible dog ownership and programs that make communities better places for dogs, their owners and neighbors. When you register your purebred dog with the AKC, you permanently record your dog in history. And you give your dog—and yourself—the chance to participate in exciting events. **Contact AKC to find out more.**