

Winterizing Your Pet

When the temperature (and the snow) begins to fall, you'll find that your pet needs a little extra care from you. Here are some points to remember this winter.

- * Cats and dogs need protection from wet and cold, whether they get it inside your house or inside their own. Cats are best kept inside when it gets cold, as are most small and short-haired dogs. An outdoor dog needs a dry, elevated dog house with clean, dry bedding and a flap over the opening to keep drafts out. Or consider adding a dog door to the garage with a soft cushion in the warmest corner.
- * A bowl of frozen water can't help a thirsty pet. Check outdoor water bowls often when it's below freezing, and break the ice or refill with water as necessary.
- * Outdoor dogs need more calories in the winter to produce body heat, so increase the amount you feed your pet. On the other hand, indoor dogs and cats may get less exercise in the cold months, and will need fewer calories to avoid weight gain.
- * Chemicals used to melt snow on sidewalks can irritate pets' paws, so you may need to wipe them with a wet cloth after an outing. Dogs outside in the snow may need the ice between their paw pads removed.
- * Antifreeze tastes good to pets, but it is a deadly poison. The most likely source of the poison is radiator drainage spots in your garage, which should be flushed with water immediately.
- * A cat may crawl up under your car seeking shelter and warmth near the engine. It may get caught in the fan and seriously injured when the engine starts. Open the hood of your car or slap it noisily with your hand before starting the engine on cold days to startle any animal sleeping there.



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