

Tips for Pet Travel in the Heat

Hidden Springs Resort offers several pet friendly cabins.



If you plan on traveling with your pet during the summer, take the time to prepare for your furry friends in advance. The Humane Society of the United States has information on traveling with your pet that may make the difference between a pleasant trip and a vacation nightmare.

Pets need exercise even when it is hot, but extra care needs to be taken with older dogs, short-nosed dogs, and those with thick coats. On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours. Keep in mind that asphalt and pavement gets very hot and can burn your pet's paws. Pets can get sunburned too, and your pet may require sunscreen on his or her nose and ear tips. Pets with light-colored noses or light-colored fur on their ears are particularly vulnerable to sunburn and skin cancer.

Your pet can suffer from heat exhaustion and heat stroke. These conditions are very serious and could cause your pet to die. You should be aware of the signs of heat stress, which could include heavy panting, glazed eyes, a rapid pulse, unsteadiness, a staggering gait, vomiting, or a deep red or purple tongue.

If your pet does become overheated, you need to immediately lower his body temperature. Move your pet into the shade and apply cool (not cold) water over his body to gradually lower his core body temperature. Apply cold towels or ice packs to your pet's head, neck, and chest only. Let your pet drink small amounts of water or lick ice cubes. Most importantly, get him to a veterinarian immediately.

Don't take your pets to crowded summer events such as concerts or fairs. The loud noises and crowds, combined with the heat, can be stressful and dangerous for pets. For your pet's well being, leave her at home. Be especially aware of these threats during holidays, such as the Fourth of July.

Never Leave Your Pet in the Car! In nice weather you may be tempted to take your pet with you in the car while you travel or do errands. But during warm weather, the inside of your car can reach 120 degrees in a matter of minutes, even if you're parked in the shade. This can mean real trouble for your companion animals left in the car.

Dogs and cats can't perspire and can only dispel heat by panting and through the pads of their feet. Pets who are left in hot cars even briefly can suffer from heat exhaustion, heat stroke, brain damage, and can even die. Don't think that just because you'll be gone "just a minute" that your pet will be safe while you're gone; even an air-conditioned car with the motor off isn't healthy for your pet.

To avoid any chance that your pet will succumb to the heat of a car this summer, be sure to play it safe by leaving your pet cool and refreshed at your cabin while you're on the road.

Dogs cannot sweat to cool down like people. They can sweat a little through their paw pads, but the main way dogs cool down (rather inefficiently) is by panting. Dogs with short noses are even less efficient at cooling via panting.

Panting isn't the easiest way to cool off, and it is much more difficult in humid weather, as there is very little evaporation. The activity doesn't have to be strenuous either, dogs just aren't built to cool off like humans are. Please keep "overexertion" in mind when out playing with your dog. It can happen much quicker than expected. Especially the "short-nosed" breeds. Dogs such as Bulldogs, Pugs, and Pekingese are most at risk for heatstroke due to high temperatures and overexertion. Because of their anatomy, nostrils may be smaller, the soft tissue at the back of the the throat may impede air flow, and they may have a smaller trachea (windpipe) than other dogs their size.

Offer small amounts of fresh cool (not iced) water, frequently.

Use a hose or let your pet swim in a lake or pool to become thoroughly wet before a walk. Evaporation will help keep your pet cool. Be sure to wet all layers of coat, especially double-coated breeds, such as Retrievers, for maximum cooling.

Watch your pet for signs of tiring and too much panting. The panting tongue out too far will indicate break time.

Search for shade-available areas.

Be mindful of pad burns on hot pavement and metal surfaces.