

## How To Pet-Proof Your Home

There's no uniform way to pet-proof your home as it varies by pet and home. To get a more personalized idea of what you can and should do to make your home safe for a pet, you may benefit from talking to an expert.

In the meantime, we'll take you through a typical home room-by-room to discuss the common hazards found in each and suggest easy ways to deal with them.

### The Kitchen

The kitchen is probably the most dangerous room in your house for you and your pets. You at least know what items to avoid, but animals don't see the same risk in a hot stove, sharp knife or indigestible trash items that you do.

The most effective way to make your kitchen safer for your pets is to make it inaccessible to them. For some pets, you can install a gate to make it impossible for them to enter the room without you letting them in, but this solution might be insufficient if you have an agile pet prone to making tall leaps. In that case, you need to attend to each of the risky areas separately.

### The Garbage

**Problem:** This is probably the biggest risk since kitchen garbage cans sometimes hold tasty treats for hungry animals.

**Solution:** You can buy special garbage cans with lids that lock to keep them out, or you can keep your garbage cans stored behind a pantry or cabinet door (although you have to be vigilant about keeping the door closed).

### Cabinets

**Problem:** Kitchen cabinets contain any number of items that can cause problems for pets: toxic cleaning supplies, dishes made of (breakable) glass, and sharp utensils, to name a few. Most animals aren't able to open cabinet doors, but if you end up with an especially smart or savvy one (or a more exotic pet, like a raccoon), you need to be concerned.

**Solution:** Even the smartest of pets should be foiled by installing simple child locks on your cabinet doors.

You don't have to worry much about the individual items in the garbage or cabinets as long as they're stored in ways that make it impossible for your pets to access them.

Good news! For the most part, bedrooms and living rooms are pretty safe. Since these tend to be the rooms that pet owners spend the most time with their pets in, we do want to address the few safety hazards that could cause problems.

### Electrical Cords

**Problem:** Dogs with chewing tendencies can cause a lot of frustration in what they ruin, but when it comes to electrical cords, the biggest risk isn't to the cords themselves. You don't want your pet getting a jolt of harmful electricity. ↗

*("How To Pet-Proof Your Home" cont.)*

**Solution:** Wherever possible, keep the cords off the ground so they're out of reach. In the instances where that's not an option, you can try to block them with furniture, tape them to the walls so they're less tantalizing to your dog, or try a product designed to discourage chewing like a cord cover or chew deterrent spray.

### Choking Hazards

**Problem:** Many of the small, everyday items you have around the house can become a choking risk for your pets. Jewelry, pens, batteries, and paper clips (things that couldn't seem less harmless in most contexts) can become a serious concern if your pet thinks it could be fun to chew on.

**Solution:** Do a review of everything in your living room and bedroom that could be a risk and store it somewhere out of reach – either too high up on a shelf for your pet to access, in a closet or pantry behind a door, or in a box with a sealed lid that your pet won't be able to easily open.

### Tall Furniture

**Problem:** Small pets may have a hard time jumping on and off of tall pieces of furniture, especially once they start getting on in age. You don't want your pets to hurt themselves just trying to get up on the couch to hang out with you.

**Solution:** Buy or build some steps or a ramp to make getting up to their favorite spots easier on them.

Some pets might have little reason to ever spend time in the garage, for others it might be a regular destination because that's where they stay when you're out or during the night. If your animals will be spending any time in the garage, you need to make it pet proof.

### Tools

**Problem:** Your tools can be a choking hazard and the sharper ones can cause cuts or other injuries.

**Solution:** Make sure you put them up out of reach. Depending on the layout of your garage, that could mean putting them in cabinets, in your workroom or simply putting a lock on your toolbox so they can't get into it. If you don't have a good out-of-reach spot in your garage for your tools and don't want to keep them in the house,

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("How To Pet-Proof Your Home" cont.)

it may be worth investing in having some cabinets or a comparable sealed off storage space installed.

#### **Garage Temperature**

**Problem:** You're probably good about keeping the inside of your home at a comfortable temperature, but most of us don't think much about the temperature of our garage. That's all well and good, unless you're expecting to keep your animals in there for any length of time.

**Solution:** If it's a time of year that's especially hot or cold, make sure there's a fan or space heater in the garage with them to compensate. If the forecast warns of extreme weather, go ahead and find somewhere to keep them inside rather than risk the health concerns that can come with overheating or freezing.

#### **Antifreeze and Other Chemicals**

**Problem:** Many of the chemicals in our cars, cleaning supplies and lawns get stored in the garage and many of those need to stay well out of reach of our animal friends. Antifreeze in particular can be deadly to pets, but any other chemicals you have should similarly be stored where pets can't get to them.

**Solution:** Wherever you figured out to put your tools to keep them out of reach, do the same for your car and cleaning chemicals. Make sure they're behind a closed door, a lock, or some kind of barrier that keeps your pet from getting into them.

All these smaller rooms should either be treated as off limits to animals or pet proofed along with the rest of your house. In particular, if you use one of these rooms to keep your animal in when you leave the house, or if you have a pet that treats one as a comfortable safe space, you need to make sure nothing's accessible that could cause harm.

#### **Medicines and Chemicals**

**Problem:** Items like cleaning supplies and prescription medicines must be your priority. You have to be careful not to leave them out where your pet can reach them.

**Solution:** Keep them behind closed cabinets or high up where they'll be out of reach. If you have a pet with a skill for opening cabinets, use some of those child locks we recommended for the kitchen.

#### **Appliances**

**Problem:** If you have a cat that likes to curl up in small spaces, your washer and dryer could become a deadly trap.

**Solution:** Make sure you always make a point to check the washer and dryer before you start it to confirm that your pet isn't inside. And keep the doors to it closed in between uses.

#### **Toilet Water**

**Problem:** Toilet water is not the safest water for your pet to drink. You use chemicals to clean your toilet that you don't want them ingesting. Also, it's flat-out unsanitary.

**Solution:** The first simple solution is to make sure your pet always has clean water in their bowl so they're not tempted. The second simple solution is to keep the toilet lid down. If you find that's not enough to keep your pets away (or you're not too consistent about the latter suggestion), then you can buy a Drink No More gadget to let you know when your pet's heading toward the toilet bowl.

#### **Porches and Balconies**

The spaces we like best for spending time outside can come with some hazards for our pets as well, particularly dogs. You want to let them be outside with you when you spend time on your porch or balcony, so take a little time to make sure the space is safe for them. ↗

("How To Pet-Proof Your Home" cont.)

#### **Height**

**Problem:** Obviously this problem is specific to balconies, but if you're high up, you have to worry about your pet falling off the edge. Cats may be able to manage the fall, but a dog will likely be severely injured.

**Solution:** Buy a mini-fence to put around your balcony to make sure they don't have the chance of falling. If you block any space along the edges they could fit through, you can trust them to hang out with you on the balcony without concern.

#### **Tight Crawl Spaces**

**Problem:** Decks and porches may have crawl spaces underneath them that a pet could get stuck in.

**Solution:** Invest in a mesh screen that blocks the crawl spaces, so they don't have the option of going in after a toy or lizard and getting stuck.

#### **Grills and Fire Pits**

**Problem:** Anything hot comes with burn risks, but a grill also tends to emit tempting meaty scents that make them especially attractive to your pets.

**Solution:** Use plenty of caution anytime you have a fire or BBQ going and keep an eye on your pet. Your pleasant backyard gathering shouldn't cost them an unpleasant burn.

#### **Yard Safety**

If you have a yard, your pet will likely spend a significant amount of time in it. Most yards are largely harmless, but for pets with escapist tendencies or yards with certain types of plants in them, you need to be careful.

#### **Escape**

**Problem:** A missing pet can be a terrifying experience. Beyond your own yard there are fast moving vehicles, other threatening animals and untrustworthy humans who might be tempted to steal your beloved furry family member.

**Solution:** A good fence is paramount if you'll be letting a dog out in your yard. Even if your fence seems mostly adequate, you should make a point to check for spots your pet could fit through after especially windy days or big rainstorms that could affect the sturdiness of it. If you have a dog that's a digger, you can try putting cayenne pepper along the edge of your fence or burying anti-dig yard guard so they can't get through even if they try. If your pet's a magician with special escape skills no matter what you try, technology can come to the rescue. Get a pet GPS, so you can pull up your pet's location through an app the moment they disappear.

#### **Toxic Plants**

**Problem:** Some plants we find lovely can be poisonous to our loved ones.

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("How To Pet-Proof Your Home" cont.)

Solution: Learn which plants are a concern and check your yard for any of the offenders.

### Choking Hazards

Problem: Many items common to backyards like sticks, rocks or fruit pits can serve as choking hazards for your pets especially any items that look like they may be tasty or that resemble toys.

Solution: Keep an eye on your pet when they're in the yard and do occasional sweeps to look for anything suspicious so you can dispose of it.

—reprinted from "Home Safety Guide for Pet Owners"  
[www.expertise.com/home-and-garden/pet-safety-guide](http://www.expertise.com/home-and-garden/pet-safety-guide) □

## Dog Joint Problems – Every Dog Has Them at Some Point In Their Lives!

Our dogs' joints, just like humans, take a pounding from running after tennis balls, hiking and jogging around with their pals. Joint problems are common in many dogs and can affect them in a variety ways from minor irritation to great pain and discomfort. Joint problems can hinder walking, exercising or performing many other tasks associated with your pup's everyday life and is no fun for anyone!

Our dogs' elbows and hips are among the most commonly affected areas for joint issues and range from dog arthritis to dysplasia. It is important for you to know the details of dog joint problems so that you can help your dog stay pain free and in good condition.

### Dog joint pain is very easy to identify

If your dog is suffering from joint pain, it is fairly easy to identify, as it will interfere with his movement and mobility. There are some signs you should watch out for that can help you recognize if your dog needs treatment for joint problems and include the following: awkward movements, stiffness, difficulty standing, limping, refusal to jump or climb stairs, an aversion to petting, swelling of the joints and sometimes even bad moody or bad temper from the pain.

### Joint issues are no fun!

If you notice that your dog is showing one or more of these symptoms, you should take your pup to your veterinarian to determine the cause of his pain. Remember that your dog may be suffering from more than just joint pain if he or she exhibits any of these warning signs.

### What causes joint problems in our dogs?

Dog joint problems are caused by many disorders, most of which manifests itself in a form of dog arthritis. There are four general categories of joint pain:

1. **Hip Dysplasia and other developmental problems:** Hip dysplasia and similar conditions like elbow dysplasia are developmental, genetically inherited conditions. They occur when the joints do not grow properly and become dysfunctional, causing arthritic pain and discomfort. ↗

("Dog Joint Problems..." cont.)

2. **Cruciate ligament problems:** Cruciate ligament problems are among the most common dog arthritis problems. They involve the wear and degeneration of a dog's ligaments as he gets older, leading to arthritis and joint pain. (Humans, particularly basketball players, tear this all the time!)

3. **Metabolic disease:** There is a type of hemophilia, can cause excess bleeding in the joints, which may lead to arthritis-like symptoms.

4. **Other diseases that could result in joint pain:** Many other diseases can cause arthritis or similar joint pain in dogs. These include obesity, Lyme disease, rheumatoid arthritis, cancer and hyperparathyroidism. Your veterinarian should be consulted if you suspect that your pet may have any of these diseases.

### Treatment for joint issues in dogs

As always, you should first visit your veterinarian so that he or she can diagnose exactly what is causing the pain in your dog's joints. However, there are some things you can do to help reduce pain and discomfort for your dog.

**Dietary changes:** Eating the proper diet can help your dog fight joint pain. A balanced, vitamin and amino-acid rich diet will help your dog stay in shape and combat arthritis.

**Exercise:** Getting the proper exercise will also help your dog fight joint problems. Conditioning is essential to staying healthy and at the right weight for your dog.

**Medication:** Your veterinarian may recommend certain medications that can help reduce pain and swelling in your dog's joints. This should only be used in addition to diet and exercise, and only at your veterinarian's recommendation.

**Surgery:** In more severe cases, your veterinarian may recommend surgery. Surgeries range in scale from simple cleaning procedures to joint replacements, but are usually only used when absolutely necessary.

### Prevention of dog joint issues

The best way to approach joint pain problems in your dog is to avoid them completely. This isn't always possible, as joint problems are often genetic and occur more often in certain breeds, but there are some steps that can be taken to reduce the chance of developing dog arthritis. As mentioned above, if you try to manage your dog's diet and exercise, make sure your dog stays at a healthy weight, and is getting the right and a sufficient amount of vitamins, it is a big step towards prevention. And, of course, keep all your veterinarian check-up so your vet can measure all of the above!

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Visit Fur Ever Friends, Inc. (<http://www.fur-ever-friends.org>). This is a website which promotes rescue, rehabilitation and responsible pet ownership.

## Introducing Your New Kitty to Your Other Cat

When you have a new kitty and bring him home to meet your favorite feline at home, there might be a little tension at first. Some cats instantly get along, while others take some time to adjust. Particularly if you have had only one cat at home and now your newly adopted kitten is getting your attention. Your older cat might feel jealous and not welcome your new kitty readily, but with some time and effort, you can help your kitties to become good friends.

It is normal for there to be some hissing, posturing and a little fighting at first, but if this doesn't end after a few days, then you might need to take some action. Just like us, not all cats get along because they have different personalities and might not be good roommates, but they can co-exist.

### What kind of play aggression is normal for cats?

It's common for kittens and young cats to engage in rough, active play. Cats stalk, chase, sneak, pounce, swat, kick, scratch, ambush, attack and bite each other... this is all in good fun. If they're playing, it's usually reciprocal. Their ears are typically forward in play, their claws may be out but they don't cause damage, and their bodies lean forward not back. If their ears are up and the claws are out, this is not fun playing, but aggression.

### Below are some ways to help your cats to get along:

1. Introduce them slowly while you can monitor how the meet and greet is going. If all goes smoothly, give them more time together. If they are not getting along, bring them back to their respective spaces.
  2. Separate their food bowls and litter boxes. You can reduce competitiveness between the cats by having multiple, identical food bowls, beds and litter boxes in different areas of your house. Designate each bowl and/or litter box to each cat so they feel they don't have to share.
  3. If your cats start to fight, try to stop the fighting by clapping your hands, spray from a water gun or a burst of compressed air (no noise).
  4. Make sure that your cats are neutered. Male neutered cats tends to be less aggressive.
  5. Try to add different perching and/or hiding spots. More hiding spots and perches will allow your cats to space themselves out as they prefer and feel as if they have their own turf.
  6. Don't try to calm or soothe your aggressive cat, just leave him alone and give him space. If you come close, your cat could turn and redirect him aggression toward you.
  7. Reward your cats when they are getting along. Praise or toss treats to reward them when you see them interact as they should; and, of course, hugs and rub down work too.
  8. Try pheromones. There are different products on the market that mimic a natural cat odor (which humans can't smell), may reduce tensions. Use a diffuser while the aggression issue is being resolved.
  9. Take a tee-shirt or cloth and rub each cat and then give each cat the other cat's shirt to smell or put it in your kitty's spot. This will help them feel more comfortable with each other and get used to their scent.
- If your cats don't get along after trying all of the above, don't feel discouraged. It can take two weeks to two months for them to get along. If the above does not work, try consulting a cat behaviorist. ☐

## 8 Quick Tricks to Make Sure Your Cat a Healthy Diet

If you have recently adopted a kitten or cat, you want to make sure that your cat is eating a healthy diet. Or maybe your cat is not eating his current food and you want to make a switch. With so many different brands on the market, it's sometimes difficult to know what is best for your kitten or cats. As long as you are feeding your cat a healthy protein based food, you are off to a good start.

### Below are 8 quick tips

#### to help make sure your cat has a healthy diet:

1. Make sure to feed your cat a diet that contains mostly poultry or chicken-liver base. Try to avoid beef, lamb, seafood (unless this is all your cat will eat), corn, soy or milk products for the wet food. Dry food provides a crunch that cats crave and can be left out all day.
2. Learn to read labels. A diet that is called "Chicken Entree" may only contain a small amount of poultry. Ingredients are listed on labels with those in the largest amount listed first. Protein or crude protein should always be the first ingredient and the fewer fillers, the better.
3. Think critically about ingredients. Avoid marketing hype and realize that those funny colors are put in foods for humans—our kitties could care less. The more it looks like real food, the better! Especially with dry diets, ingredients like herbs, mushrooms, etc. are unlikely to survive the heating process.
4. It's OK to treat your cats periodically to some cooked poultry. Other cats enjoy cantaloupe, tomatoes, etc. Remember that treats are exactly that, treats, and not the basis of a complete diet. Nothing wrong with a little variety.
5. Pay attention to your cat's appetite on a daily basis. A healthy cat eats well every day and really looks forward to mealtime. If your cat or kitten misses a day or two of eating, call your veterinarian. Usually if your cat loses his or her appetite, it is one of the first signs of serious disease in cats.
6. Never force your cat to eat a new food. Although it seems like a dog will eat almost anything, our cats are more discriminating. Make food changes slowly and patiently when switching out to a new food. Use the old food as a base and keep adding the new food until your kitty is eating just the new food.
7. Always provide a source of fresh, clean water daily to your cats. Some cats will drink out of a wide, shallow bowl, but others prefer their water from a circulating water fountain or even a glass. Just make sure that they are drinking the water.
8. You can evaluate your cat's diet by how your cat or kitten looks and feels. Cats that are eating an excellent diet are lean, have a shiny coat, don't have dandruff and

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("8 Quick Tricks to Make Sure Your Cat a Healthy Diet" cont.)

aren't constipated or plagued with vomiting and diarrhea. If you can easily feel your cat's ribs (but not see them) and if your kitty has a tuck after the rib cage (when you look down upon him or her), most likely the weight is perfect.

As always, your veterinarian is your cat's most knowledgeable resource for nutrition and advice. And if your cat does stop eating for a day, make sure to see your vet immediately. ☐

## Heimlich Maneuver for Dogs

Most people know how to perform the Heimlich maneuver on a person or child, but many with pets at home aren't aware that this can also be performed on a choking pet as well!

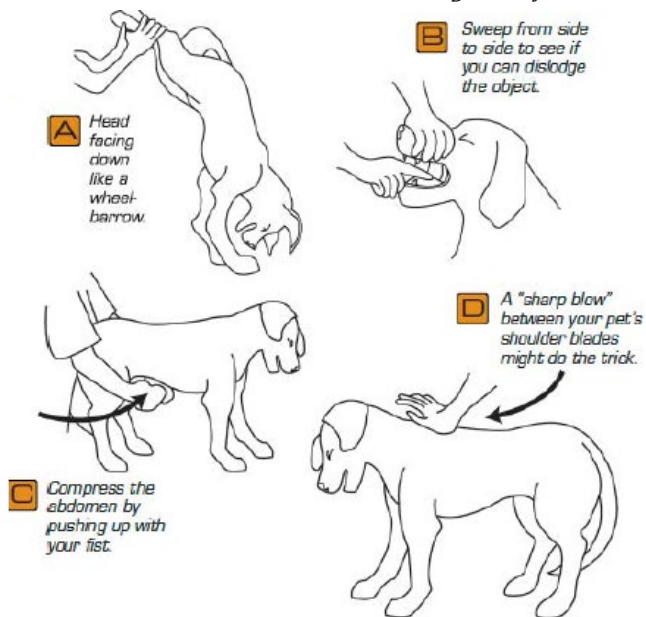
### Here's how to help...

Be aware that while you may realize that you're attempting to help your pet, your pet might see this as an attack on him/herself and attempt to defend themselves when they are already in distress. Remember to talk to your pet throughout the entire process in an effort to calm them with your voice.

Keep your voice steady, if possible.

### There are 4 steps you can try:

1. Head Facing downward like a wheelbarrow. Lift the dog by his rear legs to facilitate the object coming out.
2. Sweep from side to side in the animal's mouth to dislodge the object.
3. Compress the abdomen by pushing upwards with your fist, much like the human Heimlich maneuver.
4. If the animal's head is positioned downward a sharp blow between the shoulder blades will often dislodge an object.



—reprinted from *Packaged Goodies*

## Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation for Dogs

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, or CPR, is a combination of chest compression and artificial respiration. It is normally used when you cannot feel or hear the dog's heart beat. Once the dog stops breathing the heart will go into cardiac arrest and cease beating.

Before performing this procedure please keep in mind that Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation is hazardous and can cause physical complications or fatal damage if performed on a healthy dog. It should only be performed when necessary.

### Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation for puppies/dogs

#### less than 30 pounds (14 kg):

1. Lay the dog on a flat surface with his/her right side against the surface.
2. Cup your palms and hold the dog with one palm on either side above the heart region. (You can also place your thumb on one side of his chest and keep the fingers on the other side.)
3. Compress the chest for one inch to one-quarter or one-third the width of the chest for a count of one and then let go for a count of one. Carry on at a rate of 100 compressions in a minute.
4. If only one person is available, breathe into the dog's nose once for every five compressions that are done. If two persons are available, give artificial respiration once every two or three compressions are done.
5. Continue with the CPR and artificial respiration until the dog begins breathing on its own and the pulse becomes steady.

### Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation for

#### medium/large dogs weighing more than 30 lb (14 kg):

1. Lay the dog on a flat surface with his/her right side against the surface. (You will need to stand towards the dog's back.)
2. Put one of your palms on the dog's rib cage, near the heart region, and put your other palm on top of it.
3. Without bending both the elbows, press the rib cage in a downward motion.
4. Compress the chest for one-quarter to one-third the width of the chest for a count of one and then let go for a count of one. Carry on at a rate of 80 compressions per minute.
5. Close the muzzle with your hand before beginning artificial respiration. If only one person is available, breathe into the dog's nose once for every five compressions that are done. If two persons are available, give artificial respiration once for every two compressions are done.
6. Continue performing CPR until the dog begins to breathe and has a steady pulse.
7. If the dog does not show any signs of improvement after 10 minutes of CPR, you can stop as it has not proven successful. ☐

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and  
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This handy, one-of-a-kind encyclopedia contains over 2,000 helpful hints and trade secrets for owners of all dogs (show dogs and pets alike) in a single comprehensive book.

Compiled by Nancy Lee Cathcart (the creator, publisher and editor of an award-winning international dog fanciers' publication that spanned over 30 years), this invaluable guide contains amazing secrets and solutions from professionals in the dog-show world and from pet owners. Of the thousands of hints received, those included in this book were carefully selected to best represent the most helpful and informative solutions available. In addition, for 15 years this author owned, bred and showed consistently-winning dogs (breaking several breed records within the competitive world of dog shows), and her background proved invaluable in creating this detailed reference book.

Organized for ease of use, *The Dog Owner's Encyclopedia of Helpful Hints and Trade Secrets* is not only separated alphabetically into categories of hints and ideas, but is cross-referenced into 199 different topics.

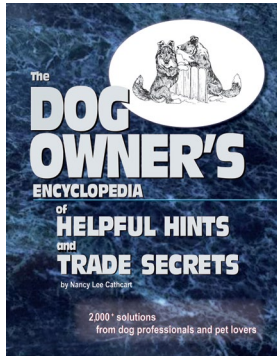
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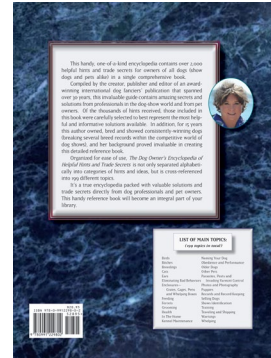
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