

# HIKING, CAMPING & OTHER OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR DOG

When you hike or camp with your pet, make sure that you are prepared. There are some important things to bring along on your journey to the great outdoors.

## MUST HAVES

- **A buckle or snap collar** preferably bright or reflective if you are going into an area where hunting is permitted.
- **Current ID.** A collar and current tag, complemented by an up-to-date microchip is ideal.
- **Current Rabies vaccination.** Many places will not let you camp or hike with your dog without proof. In Arizona, rabies has been detected in animals such as raccoons, skunks, and coyotes.
- **A sturdy 6' leash**, not a 'flexi-type' or one that allows your dog to be yards ahead of you.
- **Water, specifically for your pet.** Do not encourage or allow him to drink from puddles, streams or lakes. Don't forget to bring your pet's food if you are camping.
- **Baggies to pick up your dog's waste.** Do not leave it behind.

## GOOD IDEAS

- Carry an emergency first aid kit for your pet. Take a pet CPR and First Aid Class.
- Additional vaccinations, depending on where you are going. It may be wise to have your dog on heartworm medication or vaccinated for Lyme disease. You may want to apply a topical tick repellent a few days in advance. To learn more about these vaccinations and preventatives, speak with your veterinarian.
- Protective booties. Dog booties are almost an essential for a pet that does not get out of the house much. Their paws are not used to rough terrain, and can become easily blistered, cut or punctured by thorns, sharp rocks or hot surfaces.
- Bedding. If you are camping with your dog, he will need bedding, especially if he is not used to sleeping on the ground or rough terrain.
- If you are camping, bring a long cable to tether your dog near your campsite but away from the fire or cooking area. Do not leave your dog tethered when you are not at your campsite! Make sure he does not get tangled and make sure he has access water and shade.

## HEAT STRESS

- **NEVER** leave your pet in a parked car. Even on an 85-degree day, the temperature inside a parked car will reach 102 degrees in less than 10 minutes and will exceed 120 degrees in 30 minutes. Watch for these signs of **heat exhaustion**: loud, rapid panting; rapid pulse; glazed eyes; excessive salivation; elevated body temperature; excessive whining or agitation; staring and vomiting. Even just one of these symptoms can indicate your pet is in danger. **Immediately cool your pet down.** Place him in the shade and sponge or hose him down with cool water, especially on the head, feet and groin area. Give him small amounts of cool water to drink. Then, **seek immediate veterinary care.** This is important because even if your dog appears to be OK, there may be unseen, life-threatening organ damage that must be assessed by a veterinarian.
- Brush your pet's coat to keep it free of mats. Use caution if you shave your pet; bare skin can sunburn. To protect your pet, apply a **zinc-free** sunscreen to his ears and top of his nose.



## DO'S

- Make sure pets are permitted on the trails or camping site
- Keep your pet on the trail
- Make sure your pet has a reflective collar or gear
- Pick up after your dog
- Be respectful of other people on the trail or in campsites
- Watch for snakes

## DON'TS

- Allow your pet off the leash
- Let your pet chase wildlife
- Allow your pet to swim in areas with boat activity
- Overdo it – long strenuous hikes should be reserved for the younger dogs or those that are in shape

## KNOW YOUR PET'S LIMITATIONS

- If your pet is a “couch potato” or doesn't get out much, it is not wise to take him on the trails around Oak Creek or the San Francisco Peaks on his first outing. Just like us, pets need to be in shape.
- Older pets may not have the stamina to go the distance of a hike; be realistic about his ability and desire to go with you. A walk around the block might be all he really needs or wants.
- Young pets that are not well conditioned to frequent climbs and vigorous exercise are also subject to sore muscles, sprains and injured paws.
- Take frequent breaks, and offer him water, check his pads for stickers, cuts and bruising.
- If your pet is going to ‘pack’ his own gear, he must be conditioned weeks ahead. Most dogs are not strong enough in the back to carry much more than a few weeks' worth of their own food. A dog should never carry more than 50 percent of his weight.

## PET GEAR

- Booties - depending on what terrain you and your pet are climbing there are booties made for it.
- Water bowls and bottles - there is a wide variety of collapsible bowls and water bottles for your pet to drink from.
- Packs – are available through most pet stores, pet catalogs, and at some hiking supply stores. Make sure you have someone help you fit it.
- Sunglasses - there are sunglasses available for dogs, which may assist in keeping your pet safe from long exposure from damaging UV rays.
- Jackets – dogs get cold too! City dogs are not used to harsh weather conditions, make sure you bring along the appropriate jacket for the climate (snow, rain, wind).
- Life jackets – if your dog is going on a boat or around water it is a good idea to put a life jacket on your dog.

## IF YOUR PET GETS LOST

- Contact the Park Ranger immediately.
- Put up LOST posters around a 3 mile square radius; at restaurants, trail heads, rest stops and frequented camping spots.
- Return to the area frequently and stay awhile chances are he may find his way back.
- File a report with the nearest humane society and/or local animal control facility.
- Run a newspaper ad in publications the serve the community you were visiting.

[For more information, please visit azhumane.org.](http://azhumane.org)



ARIZONA HUMANE SOCIETY