

# As the weather gets hotter, your dog feels it too

■ BY HARRY KALAJIAN

As the weather gets hotter, your dog feels it too. Although we know not to walk our dog or get into any activity under the hot sun, we must take extra precautions. Your dog doesn't know better; all they care about is playing, and their walks. So we, the owners, must have guidelines on when and where to take them. The best places are shaded areas for either walks or play. Avoid pavement like streets because it will be too hot; gravel is acceptable and so is concrete. Those materials also get hot. However, use common sense on the length of time. In the morning or during sunset is best.

When you get home check your dogs' paws, especially if they are favoring one that might be red or raw. If it is, rinse, dry and put some Neosporin on it.

Always have water available; when they get home, room temperature water is best. If it's too cold, it's not good for them. If they drink like crazy, small amounts of water at a time will help. Or use slow down water bowls. You can also make your own by placing several good size rocks in the bowl, to slow them down even for their food.

Never leave your dog in a car, it is very dangerous even for a few minutes. Cranking your windows down doesn't work. Many people think leaving the car running with the air conditioner is okay. It is not because I have heard many dogs open the window and jump out or even put the shifter on drive or in reverse. It's not worth taking chances. Many places allow you to bring your dog.

Never drive with your dog in an open pickup truck. It's too dangerous. This also applies to convertibles; they can jump out, you may hit your brakes too hard,

or they may get too much sun.

If your dog seems to be overheated, start with watering its paws, then place a wet cool towel over them. If your dog appears lethargic and you're unsure, take them to the vet to be on the safe side.

If you think your dog has gone into shock; push on the gums. If the gum turns white and comes back pink, do not worry. If it doesn't come back pink, take him to the vet.

If you leave your dog outside in the yard, make sure there's plenty of water and a shaded area. If you have a small dog, be cautious because of wildlife and predatory birds.

If your dog is digging a hole and lying in it, that's because it needs the cool dampness. That's a sign to make sure it has a shaded area.

Another suggestion is a baby pool; put your dog in a shaded area with water. That will make him happy and cool down.

Another thing you can do is to hose them down every few hours. Start with the feet first; then you can do the body. Make sure you run the hose first, to get the cool water and avoiding the hot water that's in your hose.

*About the author:*

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■ Posey, chilling in front of Newlin's last week. Your dog is happy in the shade when the Florida sun is out.

*Photo by Kim Newlin*