

Safe Splashin' - Summertime Pool Precautions

If you're lucky enough to have a pool (or to visit someone who does!), your dog probably does a lot of swimming on hot summer days. Here are some tips to keep your best pal safe while in and around your backyard oasis.

- * Make sure your pool area is fenced in and never allow your dog inside the fenced area unsupervised.
- * While most dogs take to water instinctively, don't assume your dog knows how to swim. You may need to hold or support him at first until he builds up confidence.
- * Teach EVERY dog how to exit the pool by using the steps at the shallow end. Even the strongest canine swimmers can become exhausted if they can't get out, placing them at serious risk of drowning.
- * Be extra vigilant if your dog is older, overweight, or has impaired vision.
- * Don't allow your dog to swim in the pool less than an hour before or after eating. Vigorous exercise too close to a meal can put dogs (especially large breeds) at risk of a life-threatening rotation of the stomach known as bloat.
- * Consider investing in a floating pool alarm device that alerts you if the surface of the pool is disturbed.
- * Check for split nails if your dog is running around a concrete deck and making quick dives.
- * Rinse your dog regularly to help prevent his coat from becoming coarse due to chemicals in the pool. A hose lying in the sun will have hot water to help with the rinse, but make sure it's not too hot.
- * Tennis balls soon become waterlogged and sink to the bottom. Consider one of the great toys from our website that float and don't get soggy!
- * Be sure your dog has plenty of fresh water to drink and watch for any signs of overheating. Call it a day if he is getting too pooped!
- * Watch for hot spots if you don't blow dry your dog's coat after swimming, and brush the coat to prevent knots.
- * Dogs doing a lot of pool jumping and retrieving sometimes swallow quite a lot of water, causing their urine to become dilute. Once he's dry and back in the house, be sure your dog goes out frequently for the next several hours.
- * When your dog is done swimming, mix half alcohol and half white vinegar and add a drop to each ear to help avoid ear problems. Yes, your dog will smell like red beet eggs!