

Taking Your Dog to the Beach: Tips & Safety

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By

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A visit to the beach is an ideal way to spend a summer day, and it can be tempting to take your dog along. But be aware the beach isn't the best option for all dogs.

However, for the right dog, the beach can provide new sights, sounds, and smells to experience as well as opportunities for exciting games. However, there are doggie dangers, too. Maximize your fun by trying these activities, training these behaviors, and watching for these hazards.

What to Do at the Beach With Your Dog

You can do many of [your dog's favorite activities](#) at the beach as well. For example, you can [play tug-of-war](#) or provide your dog with their favorite [puzzle toy](#). But don't miss out on all the opportunities for beach-related excitement. Here are some activities to try on your next beach outing:

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- [Go for a walk](#). Explore the shore and let your dog soak in the new experiences like sniffing seaweed, watching scuttling crabs, or chasing seagulls. But [don't let your dog eat the seaweed](#) or [sand](#), both of which are dangerous for dogs to consume.
- [Play fetch](#) on the beach with a [ball](#) or [flying disc](#). Just be sure to choose a quiet spot so your dog's enthusiasm for the game doesn't disturb other beachgoers.

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- Play fetch in the water. Choose a [brightly colored floating toy](#) so your dog can spot it on top of the waves. Be sure to play this game in relatively shallow water, as a bad throw can send your

dog too far out from the shoreline.

- Frolic together in the water. Splashing through the waves is a fun game, but your dog can easily overtake. So, stay close to shore and don't leave your dog's side.
- Go swimming. If they are new to the water, [teach your dog to swim](#). Let them go at their own pace and fit them with a [life jacket](#) to provide extra confidence. But even experienced dogs need constant supervision to ensure they don't overtake or swim too far from shore.
- Teach your dog to surf or boogie board. If your dog is a confident swimmer, see if they might enjoy balancing on a board and surfing the waves. [Learning to balance](#) is also great for [dog sports](#) like [agility](#) or feeling comfortable in a canoe or [kayak](#).
- Play in the sand. This is great for dogs who love to dig. Alternatively, you can build sandcastles and then let your dog destroy them.
- [Go boating](#) together. If the water is calm enough, get your dog's life jacket and try a canoe or kayak ride together.

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Whatever activities you decide to pursue, always supervise your dog. It's important for your dog's safety, but it's also part of [responsible dog ownership](#). Don't let your dog disturb wildlife, damage vegetation, or become a nuisance to other people or dogs on the beach.

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Training Your Dog Should Know for a Beach Outing

To ensure a safe and enjoyable beach day, there are certain behaviors your dog should know. First, your dog should have a [reliable recall](#). Many beach activities require [letting your dog off-leash](#), so you need to be certain your dog will come back to you when called. In fact, all your dog's [basic obedience behaviors](#) should be under your control with either a hand signal or verbal cue. If your dog isn't ready for that kind of freedom, stick to on-leash pursuits like walks along the shore.

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["Leave it"](#) is another important cue for your dog to understand. Leave it means your dog can't eat something which could be garbage on the beach, a dead fish at the water's edge, or food in somebody else's picnic basket. With enough practice, this cue can also tell your dog to ignore something like wildlife or other beachgoers.

Your dog should also be well-socialized and comfortable sharing toys with others. Beaches can get busy, and your dog might encounter loads of people and other dogs. For a social butterfly, that's all part of the fun. However, if your dog is uncomfortable around people or other dogs, choose quiet times to visit the beach, such as earlier on a weekday morning, rather than times of peak attendance.

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