

GoFetch University

UNDERSTANDING DOG BEHAVIOUR

Being a good pet owner means taking the time to understand the language of our pets. Because they cannot communicate like we can, many of our dogs use signals that mean certain things. Picking up on these signs can help to better care for your pet as well as keep you and your family safe from any incidents. Here is a list of common behaviors and their meanings!

Panting

A fun fact about dogs is that they can't sweat like humans. Instead of having pores, dogs sweat from the pads on their feet and from their mouth. Therefore, when a dog is panting, this means that they are hot and are expelling heat from their body. They are doing this to regulate their body temperature. Furthermore, dogs, like humans, can change their breathing to cope with pain – something to be aware of if they have had an accident!

Dog Barking

Probably one of the most common dog behavioral signs is barking. This sign can mean a variety of different things, but most of which fall under the category of fear or danger. When a dog feels like there is a possibility of danger they make noise to notify others around them. Of course, dogs' hearing is very sensitive and many dogs can bark over small changes in their surroundings – this is an important factor to understand when you are analyzing your dog's behavior.

Dog Chewing

We have all had to say goodbye to another one of our pairs of shoes because they have become our dog's new favorite chew toy, but why does this happen? Similarly to a soothing child, many dogs chew on things to relieve the pain of their new teeth. However, as adults, this behavior can mean something else entirely. Many dogs chew on things as a means of coping with separation anxiety or regular anxiety.



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Digging

At different times of the year, digging can symbolize a variety of different dog characteristics. For example, in the summer, digging holes helps to keep dogs cool, protecting them from the heat. However, in other seasons, this behavior can be used to hide food or to uncover small rodents hidden in the ground. However, all digging is in a dog's DNA and can be more prominent in some breeds compared to others (Terriers specifically love to dig).

Jumping Up

Although a welcoming puppy that tries to jump on you can be a very cute, this behavior actually means something very different than your dog is excited to see you. In fact, jumping dogs mean to exert their dominance over you. Try to limit this behavior as this could lead to other doggy behavior don'ts.

Separation anxiety

As seen in the dog chewing section, many dogs react to separation anxiety by chewing on a variety of your priceless possessions. This is a result of the fact that dogs are pack animals. They feel anxious when they are separated from their mates or friends. To mitigate this behavior, spend time with your dog, go on long walks before leaving home. Leaving your dog in a sleepy or calm state can help deter these anxiety feelings.

Understanding these behaviors allows you to get a better appreciation for your dog's state of mind. Being aware of these activities and reacting appropriately to help your dog can strengthen your bond and lead to a much more safe and healthy relationship. Furthermore, there is lots of specific information about unique dog behaviors online. If you find that your dog is doing something consistently, check out why it is happening and understand how to stop it. Being proactive with your pet allows you both to feel more at-ease in your home!

DOG BITE PREVENTION

Dogs are man's best friends, but sometimes the differences between these animals and us are more noticeable than others. Furthermore, it is sometimes difficult to communicate with dogs and understand their emotions, which can lead to some aggressive behavior in our pets. Understanding your dog's behavioral signals can help prevent dog biting, specifically, how this can help prevent people from getting hurt.



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As a safety procedure, if an animal bites anyone, no matter the severity, they should go to see a doctor. If the attack is very severe, the victim might want to do some trauma counseling. Furthermore, when this type of incident does happen, it should be reported to the appropriate authority organization. Although these are the proper protocols for dealing with a bite, there are many ways to prevent these incidents from occurring. Being proactive with dog behavior education can help in a variety of situations.

What does a safe dog look like?

A safe dog is one that has a soft, relaxed, happy faced and a wiggly body.

What does a dangerous dog look like?

A dangerous dog has his mouth closed or mouth open with tight lips, ears forward, intense look, and hard body. Recognize that a dog about to bite may be growling, showing his teeth, raising fur along his back or holding his tail high in the air (he may even be wagging it). He may freeze and stare. Even though a dog can love a child, it can still bite if it is annoyed, aggravated or angry. This is something to watch for. Look closely at the signs of a dog that might be harboring mixed emotions. For example, a dog that wants to be left alone might show this by leaving the room, closing its eyes, yawning or licking its chops

Being proactive and understanding signs of aggressive doggy behavior can help you and your families stay safe with your pet and with others dogs!

ON-LEASH SAFETY:

Although dog leashes can, at times be cumbersome for dog owners to remember, it is important to realize their importance in keeping your dog safe. The benefits really outweigh the costs.

How can a leash save a life?

In many areas of the city, it is illegal to have a dog off-leash. This is a result of the fact that leashes protect both the dog and the dog owner from a variety of accidents. However, there are certain areas of cities that allow off-leash dog roaming. Many of the dogs that frequent these areas are well trained, have callback commands and are used to the ins and outs of living in a city. These areas are also usually located out of the way of regular city traffic and therefore are a safer place for your dog to run free. Unfortunately, not all areas and dogs are as safe in these areas as in some others. Therefore it is critical to have both a

strong and durable leash and dog collar at all times, just in case! You never know if your dog is going to see another animal and chase after it, into harm's way.

Here are five reasons why keeping your dog on a leash is a good idea:

1. A simple and effective way to control your dog during training sessions.
2. Prevent your dog from chasing and scaring other animals, children or perhaps people with a phobia of dogs.
3. Prevent your dog from wandering into and going to the toilet in inappropriate places.
4. Prevent running into the road injuring themselves and perhaps others if they were to cause an accident.
5. A means to temporarily tether your dog so they're safe if you cannot give them your attention for a few minutes.

Most Common Misconception: Dog's don't like their collars/leashes

Lots of pet owners believe that off-leash practices are better for their pups because they are more freeing and natural. However, this is not always the case. Many dogs adjust to their collars and leashes almost immediately and puppies can be easily trained to use collars and leashes by introducing it to them before meals and taking them out for walks right after. After some time, your dog will consider their collar to be a part of them – naked without it!

What type of leash to use?

There are a variety of different types of leashes and it is important to understand the benefits and problems with each, to properly make a decision about which leashes to use for your specific pet.

Here are a variety of different dog leashes to consider:

1. **The Standard Dog Leash** – usually nylon or leather, these materials are durable and will work for restraining an adult dog but are light weight for puppies. They allow movement for the dog but give the walker complete control.
2. **Retractable Dog Leash** – This leash allows you to vary the length of the leash for more dog movement. Although these leashes do provide more freedom, they can come with some problematic elements like the possibility of rope burn or pinching.
3. **Chain Leash** – This type of leash is more durable because your dog cannot chew through it. However, although most dogs understand that they will not be able to

chew through metal and stop chewing the leash, some dogs will continue to try and might hurt themselves.

4. **Harness Leash** – This leash is great for training, as it provides more control to the walker. This leash option is also great for smaller sized dogs to help avoid unnecessary pain or problems.

How to handle a dog that relentlessly pulls on their leash:

This depends greatly on the on-leash training that the dog has received since it was a young puppy. The goal here is to have your dog walk close enough to you that the leash is slack, but they can still enjoy being on the walk (i.e.: stopping to sniff things, see other dogs, etc.). At the very least, you just want your dog to understand you well enough to not be dragging you along the path. So here are some things to do to help you leash train your dog/deal with a dog that pull:

Be patient and be generous. If your puppy takes a step in parallel with you, say “Yes!” to mark his good behavior, and give them a treat. Another step, another yes! and treat. Remember that while you’re doing this training you will be giving lots of treats and you should factor that into the dog’s caloric intake. Permission to go sniff objects that interest your dog makes a great reward, too. And change up the pace, trot along with your dog now and then as a reward for keeping that leash loose.

A great exercise for you dog is to set up a goal for your dog -- it could be a biscuit on the ground, or a person they love. With your dog on leash, take a step toward the goal. The instant she draws forward and tightens the leash, say “Oops!” and go right back to the starting point. Repeat, repeat, repeat, imposing penalty yards whenever your dog draws the leash tight. Patience. Help your dog succeed by delivering treats as they keep the leash loose on the way to the goal.

Another technique to use it to just come to a complete stop every time the dog pulls. This probably isn’t as effective in the long term, but for a short walk it should do the trick!

One thing for sure though, is never yank the dog back every time they pull. This can do extreme damage to your dog, physically and emotionally.

How to choose a safe leash for your dog:

Choosing the right type of dog leash is an important factor for your dog's safety. However, all dogs and their leashes must follow specific rules to continue to keep your dog safe.

The following is five great safety tips for using a dog leash:

1. Find a leash that is the correct size for your dog. Smaller dogs mean thinner leashes and smaller hardware, while large dogs may require leashes of a slightly thicker width.
2. Never pull or drag your dog with a leash. If your dog is reluctant to come, simply backup & call his name in a happy voice.
3. Yanking or jerking a dog leash can injure your pet, especially younger pups and senior dogs.
4. If your dog likes to pull, consider using a no-pull harness.
5. Keep your leash in good shape. If the strap seems unstable or broken, replace it immediately.

Proactive dog ownership means understanding dog safety and working towards ameliorating situations to make your dog more secure. Although there are many success stories of dogs being able to find their way home after being lost, but this is not the norm. Here, at GoFetch, we want to educate all dog owners and walkers on how to make all situations as safe as possible for dogs to avoid the heartbreak of these terrible situations.

SUMMER SAFETY

It seems like all year we are just waiting for summer to come around... and when it does, we aren't ready. It's like 0 to 100 so quick and we find ourselves exhausted, burnt, dehydrated, and praying for a rainy day so that we don't get sun guilt when staying inside and watching netflix...

We aren't the only ones, though, who feel the negatives of summertime! Dogs are susceptible to just as many things as us humans when it comes to sun safety. Here we will lay out some things to be conscious of as owners and dog walkers. Dog safety is GoFetch's number one priority, after all.

1. NEVER leave dogs in cars and look out for heat exhaustion

Cracking the windows in a car makes no difference and it doesn't take high temperatures for it to be dangerous. A car parked in the shade can reach dangerous temperatures on a hot day; and if it's in the sun, the temperature can rapidly rise up to 160°F. Experiments showed that even at a mild 72°F, the inside of a car reached 116°F in an hour, plenty hot to kill a dog. If you're out running errands, the safest place for your dog is at home.

If you see a dog left alone in a car under dangerous conditions, note the car's location, color, model, make, and license plate number, and contact local humane authorities or police, who usually have authority to break in to save the animal. If you can make a good guess as to which store the driver might be in, ask the store manager to page them. If the animal shows symptoms of heatstroke, immediately take steps to lower its body temperature in a controlled manner.

Dogs can't sweat—they control their body temperature by panting. If the air in the car is near or above the dog's body temperature (about 100°F), the dog will be unable to cool itself, and its body temperature can quickly rise to fatal levels (over 107°F).

Heatstroke symptoms in dogs include: heavy panting, dry or bright red gums, thick drool, vomiting, diarrhea, or wobbly legs. If you notice these symptoms, don't place her in ice cold water, which can put her into shock. Instead, move her to a cool place, drape a damp towel over her body, rewet the cloth frequently, and get her to the vet as soon as you possibly can. A dog's normal temperature is between 100° and 103°F, so once she hits 104°F, she's in dangerous territory (106°F or higher can be fatal).

2. Water water water water

Let's emphasize some more... WATER. FRESH, CLEAN, WATER. Always make sure you have some on you, or quick access to it. Every time you need a drink, make sure your pup drinks as well.

3. Keep it cool indoors

If you're going to be gone for long hours of the day, make sure the house is cool. If you have AC, great. If not, keep blinds closed, windows open (make sure there are screens in them), fans on, and plenty of access to fresh water.

4. Sunscreen

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in dogs. Even though fur provides some protection from the sun, you should apply a pet sunblock every 3 to 4 hours to the least-hair-covered spots: bellies, ears, and around eyes; which are all areas where malignant tumors are likely to show up. If your dog has very light or thin fur, also apply to their coat. You can purchase pet sunscreen at virtually any pet store! If a dog gets sunburnt, apply a thin layer of pure aloe vera twice daily to soothe the irritated area (it's a good idea to check with a vet about the brand you use, but if it's totally pure aloe it should be okay!).

5. Keep long haired dogs with long hair

You may think you are doing your dog a favour and cooling them off by cutting their fur, but that fur is like that for a reason. It's insulating in the winter and provides a cooling system in the summer. So... resist the urge to cut it! "If hair—even long hair—is brushed and not matted, it provides better circulation and helps regulate body temperature," says Rene Carlson, DVM, president of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

6. Avoid walks on asphalt at mid-day

It's best to avoid walking a dog during the day's highest heat and humidity, which is usually between 1 and 4 PM. This is especially important for dogs with short snouts, such as bulldogs, who can't pant as efficiently in humid weather due to their narrowed nostrils and windpipes. If there is no escaping this time frame, then make sure you are well equipped with water, sunscreen, and frequent shade breaks. If you do decide to walk the dog at this time, make sure you avoid asphalt... or at least test to see if it's too hot. A good indicator of the asphalt being too hot is standing barefoot on it yourself for five seconds. If it's too hot for you, it's too hot for pups. Maybe take the dog to a heavily wooded trail with lots of shade instead!

7. Don't assume dogs are strong swimmers

Have your dog wear a life vest in a bright color in any body of water to help her stay afloat and ensure that she can be seen by swimmers and boaters. Let her get used to wearing it in your yard first.

Be aware of currents and riptides: if a dog gets in trouble in one of these in the ocean, whether while swimming or fetching a ball, she can be swept out to sea in minutes. The same goes for rivers: You need to watch out for currents, even if they're not readily visible, as your dog can be easily carried downstream.

NEVER leave your dog unsupervised near an uncovered pool. Teach her how to get out of the pool by using the stairs with her 5 to 10 times in a row. This will help her learn where the stairs are, whether she's swimming or accidentally falls in and needs to climb out.

8. Be on the lookout in lakes.

If your dog steps in a sinkhole, she may panic and need you to help her swim to where she can touch ground again. And avoid lakes and ponds with blue-green algae, signified by scummy water and a foul odor. Algae can produce a toxin that may cause severe sickness or seizures quickly if your pet ingests the water, by either drinking from the lake or licking tainted fur.

9. Mosquitoes and Parasites

Hookworms and heartworms are more prevalent during the summer and can infect your pet through the pads of his feet. Most flea and tick products are formulated to repel mosquitos as well. Human bug sprays are great for us, but they're toxic for our furry friends. DEET, the main ingredient in most drugstore bug sprays, can cause vomiting, seizures, and skin irritation when exposed to dogs. Make sure that your dog doesn't lick you post-DEET bath. Also, avoid walking at dawn and dusk AKA mosquito rush hour. If you would like, lemon eucalyptus oil is also a natural mosquito repellent.

10. Yard Knowledge

Azaleas are common backyard shrubs that can be toxic for dogs and cats if ingested, resulting in drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, heart arrhythmias, or an abnormal heart rate. Lilies are toxic to cats, so you might as well avoid those as well. Toxic mushrooms grow in many areas of the country, so be vigilant about removing them from your yard. Many plants (and all bulbs) are also toxic. Bulbs look a lot like dog toys, so keep them out of reach!

Summer also brings chemical hazards: antifreeze is particularly deadly; clean up any car spills immediately. This is also the time of year when people are using fertilizers, mulches, and pesticides in yards and on lawns. While professionals will usually put flags up, do-it-yourselfers might not. Don't let your dog wander in other yards where chemicals or cocoa mulch (toxic if ingested) might be used.

11. Avoid fireworks

First of all, don't let them eat them! If eaten, fireworks can cause vomiting, bloody diarrhea, seizures, and shallow breathing. Keep yours out of reach, and clear your yard of debris after you set off your display.

Also understand that many dogs are terrified of the loud noises that accompany fireworks. Make sure wherever you are is secure and that there is no way that your dog can bolt when the show starts. Make sure your dog feels safe, their collar has their ID on it, and there are treats, toys, and you by their side.

12. Drive Safely

As much as your dog may love to ride in the bed of a pickup, or hang his head out the window, either can cause your dog a world of hurt. Dust and gravel in the eyes are just the beginning; every year thousands of dogs are injured or killed when they jump or fall from vehicles. Even in an enclosed car, pets can be thrown and injured if you have to brake suddenly.

For car rides of any length, the very safest place for pets is in the back seat, either wearing a safety harness, or in a carrier or confined area. Pets loose in the car can distract and interfere with the driver, which could result in an accident. Harnesses designed as "doggie seat belts" provide safety during the trip, and prevent your dog from getting loose if someone unexpectedly opens the door. If your dog must ride in a truck bed, use a carrier or cross-ties to prevent injuries.

13. Always carry identification

Pets should always wear a collar or harness and ID tag, no matter where they are or where they're going. Owners, please consider having your pet microchipped as added "insurance." Thousands of lost pets have been returned home thanks to microchips!

14. First aid kit

Whether at home or away, keep a first aid kit ready in case of emergencies. There are special kits for both dogs and cats, so you never have to panic! You might also want to keep flower essences on hand, to keep your pet calm while you give first aid or head for the vet.

FOOD SAFETY

Chocolate: NO. Don't let dogs get into chocolate. Chocolate contains a very toxic substance called methylxanthines, which are stimulants that stop a dog's metabolic process. Even just a little bit of chocolate, especially dark chocolate, can cause diarrhea and vomiting. A large amount can cause seizures, irregular heart function, and even death. If a dog ingest chocolate, contact a vet or pet poison helpline immediately.

Shrimp: Sometimes. Every now and then shrimp is okay, but make sure they are fully cooked and the shell is completely removed. Shrimp are high in antioxidants, vitamin B-12, and phosphorus, but also low in fat, calories, and carbohydrates.

Eggs: Yes. There is debate whether raw eggs are good or bad; raw eggs can give biotin deficiency, but others argue the yolk has enough biotin in it to balance it out. If you're worried about it, cook them.

Turkey: Yes and no. Turkey is perfectly fine for dogs if it's not covered in garlic and all extra fat and skin are removed. BUT! You have to be very careful about bones. Poultry bones are notoriously fragile and cause very serious internal damage to dogs or choking.

Cheese: Sometimes. Most dogs are lactose intolerant, so be aware of any symptoms post digesting dairy (i.e.: diarrhea). Small doses and low fat (cottage cheese or mozzarella) are the best options

Peanut butter: Yes. Just like whole peanuts, peanut butter is an excellent source of protein for dogs. It contains heart-healthy fats, vitamins B and E and niacin. Raw, unsalted peanut butter is the healthiest option because it doesn't contain xylitol, a sugar substitute that can be toxic to dogs.

Popcorn: Yes. Unsalted, unbuttered, plain air-popped popcorn is OK for your dog in moderation. It contains riboflavin and thiamine, both of which promote eye health and digestion, as well as small amounts of iron and protein. Be sure to pop the kernels all the way before giving them to your dog, as unpopped kernels could become a choking hazard.



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Cinnamon: No. Cinnamon and its oils can irritate the inside of pets' mouths, making them uncomfortable and sick. It can lower a dog's blood sugar too much and can lead to diarrhea, vomiting, increased, or decreased heart rate and even liver disease. If they inhale it in powder form, cinnamon can cause difficulty breathing, coughing, and choking.

Pork/ham: Yes. Pork is highly digestible protein, packed with amino acids. Pork also may be less likely to cause an allergic reaction in some pets compared to meat.

Corn: Yes and no. Corn is one of the most common ingredients in most dog foods. BUT, the cob can be very dangerous, causing choking or intestinal blockage.

Fish – Yes. Fish contains good fats and amino acids, giving your dog a nice health boost. Salmon and sardines are especially beneficial. Be sure to pick out all the tiny bones, which can be tedious but is necessary. Never feed your dog uncooked or undercooked fish, only fully cooked and cooled, and limit your dog's fish intake to no more than twice a week.

Yogurt – Yes. Plain yogurt is a perfectly acceptable snack for dogs. It is rich with protein and calcium. The active bacteria in yogurt can help strengthen the digestive system with probiotics. Avoid yogurts with added sugars and artificial sweeteners, though.

Honey – Yes. Honey is packed with countless nutrients such as vitamins A, B, C, D, E, and K, potassium, calcium, magnesium, copper, and antioxidants. Feeding dogs a tablespoon of local honey twice a day can help with allergies because it introduces small amounts of pollen to their systems, building up immunity to allergens in your area. #savethebees

Garlic – No. Like onions, leeks, and chives, garlic is part of the Allium family, and it is five times more toxic to dogs than the rest of the Allium plants. Garlic can create anemia in dogs, causing side effects such as pale gums, elevated heart rate, weakness, and collapsing. Poisoning from garlic and onions may have delayed symptoms, so if you think your dog may have eaten some, monitor him or her for a few days, not just right after consumption.

Ice cream: Yes and No. Dogs are generally lactose intolerant, but still love ice cream. If you want to give a dog some plain vanilla, it will be okay - but monitor for signs of lactose intolerance (i.e.: diarrhea). If the dog expresses signs of distress, then avoid giving them ice cream in the future. If they seem okay, you may use your discretion. Always give in moderate amounts, however.

Coconut – Yes. This funky fruit contains Lauric, which strengthens the immune system by fighting off viruses. It can also help with bad breath and clearing up skin conditions like hot

spots, flea allergies, and itchy skin. Coconut milk and coconut oil are safe for dogs too. Just be sure your dog doesn't get its paws on the furry outside of the shell, which can get lodged in the throat.

NUTS

Almonds – No. Almonds may not necessarily be toxic to dogs like pecans, walnuts and macadamia nuts are, but they can block the esophagus or even tear the windpipe if not chewed completely. Salted almonds are especially dangerous because they can increase water retention, which is potentially fatal to dogs prone to heart disease.

Peanuts – Yes. Unlike almonds, peanuts are safe for dogs to eat. They're packed with good fats and proteins that will benefit your dog. Just be sure to give peanuts in moderation - nuts are high in calories and fat. Also, avoid salted peanuts.

Macadamia nuts – No. These are some of the most poisonous foods for dogs. Macadamia nuts, part of the Protaceae family, can cause vomiting, increased body temperature, inability to walk, lethargy, and vomiting. Even worse, they can affect the nervous system. Never feed your pets macadamia nuts.

Cashews – Yes. Cashews are OK for dogs, but only a few at a time. They've got calcium, magnesium, antioxidants, and proteins, but while these nuts contain less fat than walnuts, almonds, or pecans, too many can lead to weight gain and other fat-related conditions. A few cashews here and there is a nice treat, but only if they're unsalted.

WINTER SAFETY

1. Keep your pet warm

- Pet's fur is not a perfect insulator, especially when it's very cold. Mammalian systems for heat retention and regulation can be overwhelmed by excessive cold.
- If an animal's coat gets wet, the fur loses much of its insulating ability. For cats and dogs with short fur, the protection is even more minimal; your pet's toes, nose, and ears are even more vulnerable to chilly temperatures.
- Pets need protection from extreme temperatures, which includes warm, dry, draft-free shelter; plenty of food; and lots of water. If it's too cold for you, it's probably too cold for your pet.
- Don't put clothes on your pet and then shoo them outside to wander without supervision. Not only does your pet risk frostbite and other danger if his canine

clothes get wet, he may try to get out of the sweater or coat and get caught in a way that makes suffocation a risk. Monitoring your dressed-up dog is essential.

- Keep your pet on a leash in cold weather - more dogs are lost in the winter than in any other season. Unleashed dogs may also run on to partially frozen bodies of water.
- Don't let your dog eat snow. The snow may cause their stomach to become upset or there may be hidden objects in the snow

2. Know the signs of cold dogs:

- Puppies, senior dogs and dogs with certain disease conditions (such as thyroid conditions) are more susceptible to cold temperatures. Temperature related illnesses require immediate removal to a warm, dry environment and medical attention by your veterinarian.
- Hypothermia can result from extended exposure to cold and is a life-threatening condition. Watch your dog for signs of shivering, shallow breathing, weak pulse or lethargy.
- Frostbite is a temperature related tissue injury and most commonly occurs on ears, tails, scrotum or feet. Signs include discolored skin (red, pale, or grayish) swelling, or blisters. Check your pet often for signs of frostbite which may be hidden beneath fur.

3. Watch out for chemicals

- **Antifreeze** - Ethylene Glycol, car antifreeze, is a deadly poison and has a sweet taste that appeals to dogs. As little as 1-2 teaspoons can be lethal to a small animal. Clean up all spills and consider switching to a Propylene Glycol product that is safer.
- **Ice Melters** - Salt and ice-melters can act as a skin irritant. Make sure to wash your pet's feet off after coming indoors. If you want to use protective boots, try slipping baby socks onto his paws to get him used to the feel of something on his feet. Once your dog accepts the socks, he's probably ready for booties (be sure they fit snugly but not too tight. Otherwise you risk cutting off your dog's circulation and inviting frostbite.). Also, a pet-specific foot balm will help condition the pads.

4. Winter grooming is different than summer grooming:

- If you normally have your pet's fur clipped or shaved, keep the length longer in winter to keep your dog warm.
- Nails may require more frequent trimming since your dog is spending more time indoor on soft surfaces.
- If you bathe your dog at home make sure he is completely dry before going out. You may even want to switch to a waterless shampoo for the winter.

5. Food and water

- Water & food can easily freeze. Use heated bowls to prevent freezing and make sure that the electrical cords are out of reach of your pets.
- Outdoor dogs will burn more calories (up to 30%) and need extra food. Make sure that you are feeding additional rations during cold temperature.
- Indoor pets won't be eating or exercising as much, and therefore not need as much food. Adjust their food accordingly so they don't pork up over winter

6. Obedience training can be a lifesaver in the winter

- Make sure that your dog or puppy is comfortable with having their feet wiped & handled. Keep towels near the door to make cleaning your dog's feet part of your daily routine. Reward your pet for allowing you to examine the condition of pads, check for ice in between toes, and trim fur (if required.)
- Obedience training for loose leash walking will make slippery walks safer for both pet and owner.
- Commands like "leave it" can save a dog's life when confronted with a pool of antifreeze or an unknown object in the snow.
- Recall (coming when called) can keep a dog from running onto a partially frozen body of water or away from another winter hazard.

7. Speak out if you see a pet left in the cold

If you encounter a pet left in the cold, politely let the owner know you're concerned. If they don't respond well, document what you see: the date, time, exact location and type of animal, plus as many details as possible. Video and photographic documentation (even a cell phone photo) will help bolster your case. Then contact your local animal control agency or police station and present your evidence. Take detailed notes regarding whom you speak with and when. Respectfully follow up in a few days if the situation has not been remedied.

OFF-LEASH SAFETY

GoFetch always recommends that walkers keep their dogs on leash. If a dog is off leash there are a few basic safety tips that you should keep in mind.

- 1) **Recall Command.** A recall command that works all the time is a must for any dog that is off leash. The recall command needs to be effective even if the dog is distracted. Some dogs like to chase cars, herding dogs (Aussie Shepherd, Border Collie, etc.) may like to herd runners, and hounds love to follow a scent. An effective recall command will work even if your dog has caught scent of a mouse or spotted a runner they want to herd. This is a must before you allow a dog off leash. There are tons of ways to train a dog using positive reinforcement techniques to respond effectively to a recall command.
- 2) **Protected Area.** Before a dog is allowed off leash you should analyze the area around you for potential dangers to the safety of the dog. Road kill is a primary safety hazard for off leash dogs, every year tens of thousands of dogs are killed by motorists.
- 3) **Aggressive Dogs.** Any dogowner who has walked off leash trails on a regular basis has likely witnessed a dog fight, some of which unfortunately end up with blood drawn and occasionally even a serious injury or death. Most dog owners know if their dog is aggressive toward other dogs and will keep that dog on leash. However, if your dog is off leash and approaches that dog it might end up with a nasty surprise. Posture, body language, and growls/barks are a great way to read whether another dog may be aggressive toward yours. Barking at other dogs is quite a normal behavior and serves a purpose of cautioning the other dog from acting too aggressively. The loudest bark often doesn't have the loudest bite. A deeper growl and tensing of muscles is often a bad sign.

- 4) **Natural hazards:** Think bears, cliffs, etc. Our four legged friends are generally pretty good on their feet, but you will definitely want to be able to recall them when the terrain is questionable.
- 5) **Food & Water:** Contaminated water and or toxic food is a major concern for off leash dogs. Dogs may eat plants or drink undesirable and potentially dangerous items. Water that is flowing rapidly will generally be much cleaner and better for your dog to drink. Be wary of stagnant pools of water that have been sitting for days. In terms of plants you will need to have some knowledge of your local terrain to know which plants could pose a problem for your dog. Examples of toxic plants include mushrooms, lilies, daffodils, azaleas and many more.

BASIC CHILD SAFETY

Dogs are a man's best friend and they are generally very friendly and tolerant of children. However, not all dogs have experience with children and some may even be fearful of kids. When dogs are interacting with children there are a few basic rules that should govern the interaction.

As a GoFetch walker here are five basics to keep in mind when walking a dog.

- 1) **Ask the owner:** Before exposing a dog to children you should check with the owner to see if their dog has ever exhibited any aggressive behavior toward children. Most dogs are amazing with children, but some dogs depending on their experience with children can be a bit snippy.
- 2) **Warning Signs:** Most dogs will give warning signs before they act aggressively toward a human. It is always a good idea to keep an eye out for warning signals such as aggressive growling, visible muscle tension, or low tone barking that may signal the dog is stressed.
- 3) **Dog & Child Interaction:** Make sure that children are not allowed to hug, pull the hair, or pull the ears of the dog you are walking. Even tolerant dogs can be short tempered if a small child is causing them pain or making them feel confined.
- 4) **Dog Food & Toys:** Dogs can be especially possessive when it comes to food and or a special toy. Children may unknowingly upset the dog and cause them to nip at them if they try to take it away. It is best to keep children away from dogs when they are eating or exhibiting possessive behaviors relating to a toy.
- 5) **Resting Dogs:** Although dogs can often be playful, everyone needs to take a break. If a dog is bothered when he is trying to sleep or rest, or, if they are injured, they

can be more aggressive towards humans. Children do not always know when to give a dog its space, which can lead accidents. Let your kids know that dogs need breaks as well!

Hurt or Stressed Dog Safety

Dog Owners can know their pets quite well. But if you are walking someone else's dog sometimes it is difficult to understand how a dog is feeling. A hurt or stressed dog on a walk can show a variety of symptoms that should be acknowledged – not ignored.

Signs of a dog in pain:

1. Excessive Grooming – when a dog continues to lick certain areas of its body, this can be a sign of something being wrong. Check and make sure by stopping and checking out your dog
2. Heavy Panting – Although heavy panting can be normal for a variety of reasons, beware of the situation and understand if it is out of the dog's normal routine. This action could be the dog compensating for something wrong.
3. Inappetence – a dog losing their appetite is a sure thing that something is wrong with your pup. In the longer term this is definitely something to check out with your vet.
4. Shyness / Aggression – a change in behavior is an important sign of pain in a dog. If they usually are comfortable doing activities, like walking, jumping, running, and are acting aggressively or avoiding them, this could be sign of something being wrong.
5. Limping – like humans, a sign of any type of pain is not putting pressure on the hurt area. In dogs, this is the same. Make sure that your dog is not limping through its walk.

Signs of a stressed dog:

1. Pinned back ears – every dog has different ears, however most draw their ears back under stressful conditions.
2. Yawning – although this symptom can just mean that your dog is tired, coupled with pinned back ears, this sign shows that something is bothering your pup.
3. Panting – Dogs cool themselves by panting. However, like the other signs, when coupled together, this can be a sign of stress. If a dog stops panting this could mean that they are escalating in their behavior and could bite.



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4. Avoidance – have their tail tucked under their legs, avoiding eye contact, turning away from you, these are all signs that dogs are uncomfortable.
5. Barking – any type of unusual barking can be a sign of anxiety in your dog.

Noticing and understanding what each of these pain and stressed signs mean allows dog owners and dog walkers to get a better idea of how their dog is feeling. If you are out on a walk with a dog and see your dog experiencing any of these behaviors, you should immediately evaluate the situation. If you are a dog walker, reach out to the dog owner to talk about the next steps in the walking process and decide together on how to proceed. For more extreme cases, you can contact a vet, but it is always important, when walking others' pets, that you notify the owner immediately if a change of course of action is required.