



Tips, advice and some fun facts about our best little friends who mean so much to us!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Can you believe that Christmas is almost here already? Isn't this just the best time of year for little children? Seeing the delight on their faces as they open their presents from Santa is just wonderful. For me, having all the visitors, turkey dinners and the hustle and bustle of it all brings lots of warmth and happiness. I really hope it's a lovely time of year for you too.

Of course it's a pretty exciting time for our dogs, too, as they get to spend lots more time with us during the holidays. Some will especially enjoy all the mischief they can get into with the gifts and decorations.

While it's great to relax and enjoy Christmas, it's also worth taking a little extra care with our dogs over this period. A change in routine and all the new strange objects in our homes can provide extra risks for our dogs. So, here are a few pointers to make sure your little buddy has an enjoyable and safe Christmas too.

First of all keep an eye on your Christmas tree, especially if you see that your dog loves it as much as you do. It's not hard to imagine a large dog knocking it over and trailing it across the living room! Of course, there's always the lights and bulbs and tinsel to watch, too, because mistaking a bulb or electric lead for a new chew toy is not the smartest thing for your dog to be doing!

The festive season brings a temporary change in routine for many dogs, so it's not surprising that some get anxious over the new and noisy kids' toys or over all the family gatherings. If you'll have lots of excited little children in your home this season, maybe remind them to play gently near the dogs and to slowly introduce them to their new toys. While a remote control car whizzing along the floor can be hilarious for children, it can be absolutely terrifying for dogs!

It's likely your dog will beg for a bite of that delicious turkey dinner. Of course the occasional scrap of dog-friendly food won't hurt them a bit if you want to give them a special treat—just be very careful with turkey leftovers, because dogs tend to get right to the bones and can get them lodged in their throats. It's best to give them a little piece of the meat that has no bones in it if you want to give them something tasty to enjoy with the family. Remind the kids, too, that chocolate agrees with them much more than it does with dogs!

Anyway, the most important thing this Christmas is that you really enjoy it and that you, your family and your dog stay safe and well. I really do hope you get plenty of time to relax and spend precious time with your family because, before you know it, we'll be starting a New Year once again. Have fun and have a lovely Christmas.

Joan

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My Boys 'Big Adventures':



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A Wonderful World of Animals!

! Alfie, a flat-coated retriever, is now "Alfie the Arsonist" to his owners, the Gregson family. Ananova.com notes that Alfie caused £6,000 worth of damage when he jumped up on the Gregsons' stove in search of a bite to eat and accidentally flipped a switch that lit up the chip fryer. The Gregsons awoke to smoke detectors late that night and were able to escape the fire unharmed. The fire brigade responded quickly and took care of Alfie's accidental arson.



I'm an approved member of the Pet Care Trust, and British Dog Groomers Association. So you can have peace of mind knowing that while your dog is in my care it will be groomed to the highest standard and will be given the greatest level of care at all times.

"Man's best friend is what we say, so let's treat them well on Christmas Day"

Thinking of Less Fortunate Dogs This Christmas!

Your dogs, and all those who belong to loving families like yours, are so very lucky to have a wonderful home throughout the year. However, there are many, many homeless and less fortunate dogs who have not yet found owners as good as you. Hopefully they will receive some of the care and attention they deserve when the spirit of Christmas reminds us all to do what we can to help them out.

Please take a moment to think on the needs of rescue dogs as you celebrate Christmas with your own dogs. These less fortunate dogs of the world truly appreciate whatever it is we can offer them, from a small gesture to a major change in their lives!

There are lots of ways to help. Maybe a dog lover in your family would appreciate the gift of you making a donation to a rescue shelter on their behalf. Or, ask the local shelters if there are any items or supplies they specifically need this season.

While the donation of money is often the best way to help these dogs they can also get lots of benefit from a donation of your time. Maybe offer to walk a shelter dog with your family one day, or stop by to give them some love and attention.

If a puppy is on your family's wish list for the New Year, please consider a dog adoption, as this will bring joy and fulfillment to the dog and to you!

If you could help a dog in need this Christmas that would be so kind of you. The smallest things really can make a world of difference to their lives. Plus, it will leave you feeling great knowing that you've made the lives of a few defenceless animals that little bit better.

Photos of your Dog Taken Over Christmas & New Year!



Now I know that you all like to dress your dogs in Santa outfits and the like over Christmas and New Year. So this year, get your camera out, take some photos of them, and send them to me. They could be photos of them in their new Christmas coats, Santa outfits or even funny shots and I'll include them in January's issue. Get creative people ...

Xmas Donation to Cheshire Dogs' Home!



As most of you already know, I normally send Christmas cards to everyone, and the dogs who come in for grooming in December get a small Christmas present. It's nice way to be able to thank you all for your business throughout the year. However, this year, after giving it a lot of thought, I've decided instead to donate a proportion of every groom fee for those dogs who come for grooming in December to one of the local dog shelters, and I've chosen the Cheshire Dogs' Home, which is a local shelter for lost dogs.

Our dogs are very privileged, they get lots of treats and toys at Christmas, and have plenty of food and a nice warm bed with lots of love and affection. The dogs at the shelter aren't so lucky so I'm sure you'll all agree

that the donation is a great way to help those dogs who will spent the Christmas and other times without such privileges.



Jack Russell Saves Her Owners Life!



! Pearl, a two-year-old Jack Russell cross, is said to have saved her owner's life when he suffered a heart attack. Her owner, Stricken Wagner, who

had collapsed said that the pain from his chest just melted away after Pearl showed him a heart-shaped patch of hair in her coat. Doctors say that he did indeed have a heart attack but that it stopped suddenly and Mr. Wagner is now doing fine, according to ananova.com.

Doggy Humour!

Woman to dog trainer: "My dog goes into the corner whenever he hears a bell ring."

Dog trainer: "Well this is normal—he's a boxer!"

Have you heard of the latest cross-breeds? There's the cross between a Pekingese and Lhasa Apso, known as the Peekasso. A Pointer and Setter makes the Pointsetter! Then the financial experts out there probably love the cross between a Newfoundland and Bassett Hound, as this is the Newfound Asset Hound. Don't know about the Spitz and Chow-Chow mix, though, because a Spitz-Chow sounds like a really messy dog to have around the home!

Don't Forget the Dog at Christmas!

While some people may decide not to include the dog on Santa's list, more and more of you aren't forgetting about your four-legged member of the family. Christmas gifts for dogs can range from a necessary item to an over-the-top extravagant gift. But however you choose to celebrate Christmas with your dogs, you're sure to find something special for them that's within your budget—because some of the best gifts are free!

Some extra play time or a walk through a new area is one gift that a dog is sure to love, as they'll adore the time spent with you and will feel good from the exercise. A new area delights them with new smells and a sense of adventurous travel so, if Christmas gifts for doggies is not your style, you can still make it a special occasion for them, too.

Go for something practical if your dog's belongings are wearing thin. A new collar and lead or a doggie backpack is something useful that you both can enjoy during walks. Or, pick up some nice dishes for their food or a comfortable new dog bed.

There are plenty of edible and non-edible treats to fill a gift basket for dogs if you'd rather go that route. Gourmet dog cookies, a few bones, some new chew toys, a doggie blanket and spa-quality brushes or conditioners will give your dogs lots of enjoyment throughout the festive season!

But if you really want to go all out with your Christmas gifts, you can find fun and interesting presents for your canine companions. There's actually a dog-friendly non-alcoholic wine for dogs now, so you can sip your own wine and offer your dogs a beef or chicken-flavored beverage to share at your side. How about a canine canopy bed or a plush convertible automobile bed? Anything you can imagine for your dog is probably out there, so take a look at dog gifts online or shop around your local pet stores for that perfect find.

However, a dog's happiness comes from their loving owners and from having all of their needs met, so whatever you choose to do with your dogs for the festive season it's sure to please them!

Doggy Quiz

Dogs were bred for specific jobs and activities. Can you match each breed to its historical use?

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Poodle | A. hunt wolves and bear |
| 2. Rottweiler | B. house pet for Ming dynasty |
| 3. Pug | C. retriever of game |
| 4. Labrador | D. herding and guarding |
| 5. Weimaraner | E. game retriever from water |
| 6. Shih-Tzu | F. pet of Buddhist monasteries |
| 7. Pomeranian | G. sheep herder |

Why Dogs Bark!

Some dogs bark inside the house and others do it outside, but why? A social bark is used to greet you and to bark along with other dogs outside, while an alarming bark is used to warn dogs away or to warn you of an intruder. Other barking can come from anxiety or attention seeking. If you're working with your dog to bark less often, the first step is figuring out why he's doing it!

8 Signs Your Dog is Happy and Healthy!

The little differences in a dog's behaviour and appearance can tell you a lot about whether they're feeling their best or if they could use a visit to the vet. Is your best little friend showing the signs of health and happiness?

1. Plenty of tail wagging and normal behaviour: Dogs can show a change in character when they're not feeling their best. There's no cause for concern here if your dogs are interested in all of their favourite activities and if they maintain their normal levels of energy. Check behaviour changes with your vet and then a dog trainer if your dogs don't seem their usual selves.
2. Bright and shiny eyes: Redness, cloudiness, discoloration, sensitivity or coloured discharge can signal eye health problems, such as injury, infection or disease.
3. Soft and shiny coat: A clean and silky coat comes from proper grooming and overall dog health. Watch for mats, ticks and fleas to keep a gorgeous coat, and check their diet and skin if you notice any problems.
4. Smooth and healthy skin: Skin that's free from sores, itching, redness and parasites is skin your dog loves to be in!
5. Clean ears: Odor, itching, redness or waxy buildup can indicate a problem with a dog's ears, which may require medical treatment.
6. A Healthy Mouth: Pink gums, clean teeth and non-offensive breath are all signs of good health in dogs. Foul breath can come from a variety of internal issues, so please contact your vet if your dogs have bad breath or if you see any sores in their mouths.
7. Clean Anal Glands: If your dog scoots their bum on the floor or has soreness around the rear, it's time to have their anal glands checked for buildup or infection.
8. Wet and Cool Nose: Dog's noses are so very important to them! It should be slightly moist and cool to the touch without discharge or cracks in the skin.

Did You Know?

*The Basenji breed does not bark, and the Newfoundland is a great swimmer because it has webbed feet.

*Dogs are not actually colourblind—they see in colour but the colours aren't as bright as they are for humans.

*A one-year-old dog is as physically mature as a fifteen-year-old human.

'Pet of the Month'



This is Toby - he's a Westie and belongs to Debbie Finnegan who lives in Bowden, Cheshire. She told me that Toby was so excited to be dressed up for Halloween and even got to go 'treat or trick' with her children. He had so much fun, but he's only a puppy, and was so tired when he got home that couldn't wait to settle down in his comfy bed for some well earned sleep. It's hard work all this 'trick and treating' lark.

Answers
to Quiz
1 - E
2 - D
3 - F
4 - C
5 - A
6 - B
7 - G

Exercising Your Dogs

Did you know that small dogs may need more exercise than a great big dog does? The amount of exercise needed by dogs depends on their age, breed and level of energy, though they may need more if they have any behavioural problems. Aim for 30 minutes to 1 hour each day, and split the time up if needed. You and your dogs will both feel good from that extra lap around the park!

Does Your Dog Have Tear Stains?

Eye tear stains are quite common in some dog breeds and are caused by a variety of factors, such as allergies or genetics. The dark staining can come from bacteria or yeast that grows in the moisture, but there are things you can do reduce and remove these stains.

The first step is to cut back or eliminate foods and treats that contain artificial colours. A quality dog food will reduce the tear staining and also keep stains from forming around their mouths! Provide your dog with bottled or filtered water, too, as a concentration of minerals in the water will contribute to the stains.

Use a wet cloth to wipe the tears away each day, and talk with your veterinarian about tetracycline or calcium carbonate used for reduction of tear stains. You may also want to have your dog's eyes examined for any possible infection or underlying problems.

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It's always good to reuse and recycle so by passing this newsletter on or leaving it where others could get to read it really would be benefiting everyone.

To make an appointment or if you just want to ask a question please contact me at:

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