



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

Hello again. With the arrival of June, many of us turn our thoughts toward summer holidays. Many more of us are taking our pets along on holiday, so this month, I'm going to jump straight into offering advice and a few tips for travelling with your pet.

What could be better than heading off with our little friends on a nice relaxing holiday? With many more hotels allowing pets, and with the easing of restrictions on taking your pet abroad, it really is much easier to do this nowadays.

But it's just not as straightforward as gathering up a few bowls and telling your dog to jump in the back seat of the car or campervan! Taking your pet with you on holiday requires a little more thought, especially if you plan to go abroad. Here are a few important tips:

* Before you go, make sure that all your dog's vaccinations are up to date. Travelling can be quite stressful on a pet, which is also affected by health and age, so it's worthwhile to have the vet give your pet a good overall checkup beforehand.

* Do your homework on the area you plan to visit. Check that there are no increased health risks for your pet in that area. Some countries or areas can have an increased risk of ticks, fleas, worms or other serious canine ailments.

* If you plan to take your pet out of the country on your holiday, you'll need to ensure that certain 'DEFRA' regulations are complied with and that the correct certificates are obtained. You'll also have certain obligations to undertake when coming back into the country, such as having your dog treated for fleas, ticks and worms. Speak to your vet or go online to find out more about pet travel regulations.

* Increase their comfort by taking along familiar items, such as their bed or favourite toys.

* Remember to monitor the temperature in your vehicle, as the weather may be very warm on your journey. Don't ever leave your pet in a vehicle on a warm day, even when stopping for quick lunch on the way. The temperature inside your vehicle can soar quickly. As always, make sure they have plenty of water to drink on the journey.

* When you arrive at your destination, try not to let the excitement of the new place let you slip your guard with your pet. In unfamiliar surroundings, it's really important to closely monitor your dog so that he doesn't wander off and get lost.

Of course, one of the most important things to do is to have fun! So if you're off on your holidays in June, I really hope you have a great time.

Joan

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My Boys 'Big Adventures':

"I'M A WESTIE - GET ME OUT OF HERE!"



"Mum - come quick - I'm stuck in the bath and can't get out - MUM - hurry up I'm getting wet..."

(That's Danny in the Bath, always getting himself into something!)

Funny Animal Quirks:

! A cat in Norwich has become a vegetarian. According to the Daily Mirror, Becky Page saved Dante from near starvation when he was a kitten.

When Becky tried feeding him the usual food that cats like, he just turned his nose up at it. Then one day she found him tucking into a plate of organic vegetables that were left to be thrown out.

Now Dante refuses to eat anything other than organic vegetables. It's very rare for cats to be vegetarian as they are obligate carnivores.

! A cow decided to take a bath in a swimming pool in Buckinghamshire. According to the Daily Telegraph, Mark and Zoe Ryder were shocked to find the cow swimming around in their pool after it had broken through the garden fence.

The couple called the fire brigade and RSPCA but the cow calmly walked out of the pool and returned to the field when they arrived.

"I love grooming your dog I'm sure you can tell, for me it is fun and I get cuddles as well!"

'Having Fun At Best Friends'

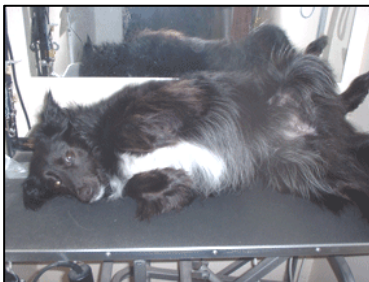
Each time your dog comes in for grooming I try and make it as enjoyable as possible for them. After each groom, and if the weather and time allows, I try to spend a few minutes playing with your 'best friend' on the patio. And as you can see from these photos Findlay, Monty and Bertie are having a fine time playing ball. While Jessie wants her tummy rubbed, and Millie always heads straight for the grooming table, her tail wagging, waiting for me to lift her up - so funny to see ...



Findlay



**Monty
'Playing Ball'**



**Jessie
'Please Stroke
my Tummy'**



**Millie
'Trying to get
onto the table'**



**Bertie
'Playing Ball'**

Keeping Your Pet's Teeth Clean!

You may not have realised it but pets can have dental problems too! Tartar and plaque can build up on your pet's teeth, just as it would on your own if they were not kept clean. This can lead to gum disease from which bacteria can lead to other more serious health issues.

If your pet's breath constantly smells bad, it's possible that they have a dental problem. Taking care of your pet's teeth is just as important as any other aspect of their health care.

One of the biggest effects on your pet's teeth is the food you are feeding them. In the wild, dog and cat teeth were naturally cleaned by the food they ate. The tough, fleshy fibers of other animals would "scrub" their teeth as they bit through hair and skin. This 'scrubbing' effect, combined with a high flow of saliva in their mouths, would help keep all the teeth clean and free from the build up of plaque.

However, in many manufactured pet foods there is no provision for this natural cleaning process. In fact, soft and sticky canned food can contribute greatly to the build up of plaque on your pet's teeth. So it's important to brush your pet's teeth regularly. When possible, try to do this no less than 3 times weekly.

There are various types of pet toothpastes available, which unlike human toothpaste, don't contain fluoride, can be safely swallowed by your pet and don't froth during brushing. You can also use a wet washcloth to scrub his teeth if you do not have any toothpaste available.

It's important to try to make brushing your pet's teeth fun for them, so start when they are young and make it enjoyable for them. This will make it much easier for you too.

Also try to provide your pet with the opportunity to create the natural teeth 'scrubbing' process. This can be done by giving them dental type chews or toys such as Kongs. As they chew and bite into these, the plaque will be naturally scrubbed off their teeth.

If you're in any doubt about your pet's dental hygiene, please speak to your vet.

Interesting Dog Breeds!

Irish Wolfhounds were originally bred as war dogs in ancient times. They were also used to guard land and property.

Later the Irish used this breed to hunt wolves and wild boar. They were obviously good at this task as both are now extinct in Ireland.

While some people believe that the Wolfhound is the national dog breed of Ireland, this is not the case. In fact, there is no official nationally adopted dog breed in Ireland.

Famous Dog Owners?

Can you guess the breeds of dogs that these famous people own or have owned in the past?

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Justin Timberlake | A. Chocolate Labrador |
| 2. Mariah Carey | B. Cocker Spaniel |
| 3. Minnie Driver | C. Rottweiler |
| 4. Roy Rodgers | D. Black Labrador |
| 5. Bill Clinton | E. Yorkshire Terrier |
| 6. Will Smith | F. German Shepherd |
| 7. Oprah Winfrey | G. Bichon Frise |
| 8. Barbara Streisand | H. Shih Tzu |

My Dog Growls At Me When He's Eating!

If your dog snarls, growls or even snaps when you go close to him while he's eating, then you have a fairly serious problem. With this behaviour there is a clear dominance issue going on in your pet's mind. You can imagine it as being similar to a pack of wolves in the wild when they feed. The more dominant members of the pack get to eat first and if any lower members of the pack try to get close, they are growled and snapped at.

In your dog's case, they see everyone else as lesser members of their pack, so they claim the dominant position when eating.

While you may be careful around your dog when he's eating or even be ok with this behaviour, it's a problem that you really must address. Say a child or a visiting toddler unwittingly ventures too close while your dog is eating--the consequences could be very serious. But also, your dog is not in a happy relaxed state when he's eating like this. Wouldn't it be better to see him relaxed and happy when he's eating rather than gulping down his food while being tensely on guard all the time?

To help stop your dog from being territorial with his food, here are a few tips. But please note that when your dog is extremely aggressive and threatening physical harm toward you, you'll need to get advice from a reputable dog trainer.

- First of all, to show your dog that you are the dominant member of your pack you must "own" the food, so that he's only allowed to eat with your permission.

- To do this, command your dog to sit before placing the food down. If he tries to move toward the food without permission then physically block him (stand between him and the food). Keeping very calm but assertive, tell him to sit again. Depending on your dog's dominance and determination, this can take a lot of repetition.

- If your dog growls while he's eating, step between him and his bowl. It's so important that you don't snatch the food away from your dog as that creates a game and makes him pursue it more. Again, it's so important to remain calm but assertive during this training.

- Your dog may try to circle around you to get to the bowl, so to counteract this, just circle around with him while continuing to face him and blocking access to the bowl.

- If you have two or more dogs, make them sit before placing the food on the floor. You should then stand between them while they eat from their separate dishes. Carry out the above corrections if one becomes aggressive.

Over time when their behaviour improves, you can reduce the need to monitor them as they eat. But at any sign of this behaviour returning, repeat the corrective actions again.

Mats! - Why Are They Such A Big Problem?

Mats are formed in your dog's coat when individual hairs tangle together. These tangles, if left un-brushed, tighten into thick knots that then become resistant to brushing.

Tangles in the hair can be caused by something as simple as the daily activities that your dog gets into. If the coat gets wet and muddy, or if debris such as little twigs, grass, grit or dirt gets into the hair, tangles can form. Even the way your dog lies down can be enough to tangle the fur in certain areas of his body.

Mats are more common on medium to longhaired dogs but thick undercoat on shorthaired dogs can also become matted.

So what's the big problem? Surely, if mats form we can just brush them out—right? Well no, we can't because if the tangles have already formed into mats, it's too late as we've got to think about your dog's welfare!

When tangles form into mats, they become tighter and thicker over time. So if they're left, it becomes impossible to untangle the hair by pulling a comb or brush through the coat. If you then try to force the brush through the mats, you will simply be pulling on the remaining hair that is attached to your dog's skin.

Ask a friend to grab a small amount of hair on the side of your head and pull it as hard as they can—that's how mat pulling feels to a dog! While you shouldn't really have a friend do this, you can imagine how painful it would feel. By allowing mats to form in their coat, and then by trying to brush them out, it causes a lot of pain, which is just too cruel!

So what's the solution if the coat has become matted? If your dog's coat is already tightly matted, then in most cases, it requires the entire coat to be clipped off. At this stage there is really little choice as it's the kindest option for your pet.

However, the good news is that your dog's hair will grow back again. By taking the necessary steps to keep a coat tangle and mat free, you will be able to avoid full body clipping in the future!

Please note, however, that when allowing several months to pass without grooming or regular brushing, many dogs' coats become a matted mess. Some form into one solid pelt that resembles that of a sheep, which is painful and distressing for your dog. Mats tighten into the skin, thereby restricting movement and possibly making the dog unbearably warm.

Severe skin irritation, hair loss and other health issues are common with matted hair on dogs. Taking all precautions against hair matting is vital to the good health of your dog, which will surely please both you and your dog.

So how can you keep your dog's hair from becoming matted? Well, the key to keeping your dog's coat mat free is to straighten out the tangles before they form into mats! This requires regular brushing, sometimes as often as every day. But that's what it may take to ensure the knots come out!

Mats can form in very hard to reach areas, so daily care may require specialised brushes and technique. I'm happy to advise you on the correct tools and techniques, as I know that you, your dog, and certainly I will all be thrilled with a mat-free coat!

"I wonder if other dogs think poodles are members of a weird religious cult."

~ Rita Rudner

Doggy Fun – Owners Thinking on Their Feet!

Two men are walking their dogs, a Daschund and a Labrador. They decide they'd like to go into a bar for a drink. "But we can't bring our dogs into that bar," says the Daschund's owner. "Hey, no problem," says the Labrador's owner. "Just watch this." He pulls out a pair of sunglasses and walks into the bar. "Hey, no dogs!" yells the bartender. "But this is a seeing eye dog," says the Labrador's owner. The bartender apologises and shows them to a chair. So, the Daschund's owner decides to follow suit, whips out his sunglasses, and walks into the bar. "Hey, no dogs!" yells the bartender. "But this is a seeing eye dog," replies the owner. The bartender objects, "Hey, Daschunds can't be seeing eye dogs!" The Daschund's owner gasps, "Daschund? They told me they were giving me a Labrador!"

"To sit with a dog on a hillside on a glorious afternoon is to be back in Eden, where doing nothing was not boring - it was peace." ~ Milan Kundera

'Pet of the Month'



This is Ticho - he's a Shih Tzu and belongs to Stella Bates who lives in Runcorn. She told me that although this photo was taken a few years ago, he will be 15 years old on 1st July. He loves to go 'walkies' and going out in the car, and he shakes with excitement at any furry animals and loves to be near them.

Answers
to Quiz
1E
2H
3D
4F
5A
6C
7B
8G

Will Swine Flu affect my Pet?

All the recent media publicity and worry over Swine Flu has been centered on it affecting humans, but could our pets also be at risk from such a virus?

Well the good news is that at the time of writing this there is no evidence to suggest that Swine Flu will affect dogs or cats. So there's no need to worry just now.

While dogs and cats do have their own versions of influenza viruses, historically there never has been any known transmissions of these types of viruses from humans to dogs/cats or vice-versa.

But all viruses can change, so it's best to keep an eye on the news and, of course, if we hear anything we'll be sure to let you know.

Please note: If you happen to own a pet Ferret you may want to seek further advice. Ferrets are generally susceptible to human influenza viruses. Speak to your vet to get more information.

Fascinating Doggy Facts!

! Dogs have a strong natural instinct to defend themselves or their pack against attack. This defensive instinct can cause them to be fearless against a much bigger attacker.

A small Yorkshire Terrier once saved its elderly owner by fighting off an Akita, who was almost 70lbs heavier, and much, much larger. The brave little battler survived, needing only 9 stitches.

"I wonder what goes through my dog's mind when he sees us peeing in his water bowl." ~ Penny Ward Moser

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

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