



Grafton Dog Obedience Club Inc.

KEEPING YOUR DOG COOL IN HOT WEATHER

As we approach summer we need to think about protecting our dogs from heat injury.

In the backyard, ensure that your dog has somewhere to rest in the shade. Shady trees, dense shrubs, covered decks or verandahs, or access underneath a high house (although beware of dirt areas under the house as these can become a haven for fleas) can all provide suitable shade.

Make sure your dog always has access to cool drinking water. Use bowls that don't spill easily and have a number of containers of water in different areas of the yard so that water is available even if one bowl is spilled or used up. Make sure water containers are out of the sun so the water stays cool. There are also self-filling water bowls available which are connected to the water supply and have a concealed float system so the bowl is automatically refilled whenever your dog has a drink.

For dogs that enjoy water, set up a small portable child's wading pool in a shady area of the back yard. One half of a clam shell type pool is ideal. The pool only needs to have about 5 - 10 cm water in it, depending on the size of your dog. Your dog can then splash and play in the water to cool off, or even lay in it if he is really hot. To avoid wasting our precious water, place the pool under a tree or near shrubs so any water splashed will benefit the plants.

Indoors, you can use a cool-down mat to keep your dog cool. These are especially good for old dogs or those that really feel the heat. The mats contain water holding crystals that swell when the mat is soaked in cool water so the mat stays cool for a long time. Your dog can lay directly on the cool, damp mat or the mat can have a waterproof cover on top so your dog stays cool but dry.

When out walking in hot weather, your dog can wear a cooling neck band to help keep him cool. You and your dog could even wear matching neckbands for a truly co-ordinated look!

Never leave your dog unattended with a cooling mat or when wearing a cooling neckband.

Also avoid exercising your dog, especially strenuous exercise, during the hotter part of the day. Early morning and evening are safer times to exercise in hot weather - for humans as well as dogs!

Swimming is the exception as your dog may enjoy a cooling swim on a hot day. Unfortunately, our beautiful Clarence River is not a safe place for your dog to swim. Sharks large enough to kill a dog can be found as far up the river as Copmanhurst so only allow your dog to swim where it is safe.

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