

WHEN IS MY DOG TOOO HOT? AND WHAT DO I DO?



Kathy Dannel Vitcak



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Dedication

To all of the dogs who have filled our hearts and to
all the ones yet to come.

Tili, the very patient Leonberger/Great Pyrenees cross above left us
too soon this last spring. She was the kindest, most gentle dog.
Larkan, the little Brussels Griffon on her back, still looks for his best
buddy and guardian. We dedicate this book to her.

by Kathy Dannel Vitcak

When Is My Dog TOO HOT? And What Do I DO?

In 1993 I opened my heart to my first brachycephalic dog. Joker, a little brindle French Bulldog, jumped into my arms and stole my heart. He also changed the course of my life that summer day in Texas.

Since then, I was immersed in the world of French Bulldogs, from breeding and showing them to graphic designer for some of the early French Bulldog magazines to writing the French Bulldog Happy Healthy Dogs book for Howell/Wiley Books and now, The Blissful Dog Inc. For most of my time showing Frenchies they were a niche dog breed that few people knew about. It has only been in the last few years that Frenchies exploded in popularity. Of course, viral popularity is not always the best thing for a dog breed, especially a dwarfed brachycephalic breed with the potential for health issues, such as the French Bulldog.

Living and showing dogs in Texas gave me a LOT of experience traveling with dogs. I rode with handler friends all over Texas/Oklahoma and their main breeds were Pekingese and Chows. I learned a lot from those adventures!

This booklet is a brief overview of how to determine if your dog is overheating and what to DO! The info is applicable to all dog breeds and mixes. There is also bonus info on the heat safety needs of all flat-faced dogs. We're very canine inclusive around here!

Full transparency; I am the Founder and CEO of The Blissful Dog, Inc. and you will may our products within these pages.

Blissfully,

Kathy

Kathy Dannel Vitcak
CEO & Founder | The Blissful Dog Inc.

PS: Shown with me in 2000 is CH. Jackpot! Money Money Money, CGC, ROM (brindle) and CH. Jackpot! Love of Money (Lover Boy-cream). Lover Boy was the very FIRST French Bulldog to achieve Excellent on his OFA Hip Evaluation. Money was his father and the first Frenchie to receive an ROM (Registry of Merit) from the French Bulldog Club of America. I love this picture of the three of us, please allow me the small vanity of using a 23 year-old picture.



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Yes, This Lab Is HOT!!!

How To Tell When Your Dog Is Too Hot & What To Do When They Are

If you've ever seen a dog get over-heated, you know frightening and stressful the situation is for all involved.

We can only imagine how completely terrified our dogs are if they get too hot. They would have had no idea why they were slowly suffocating and cannot breathe. We're going to do all we can to ensure this never happens on your watch. If it does, you will have the tools needed to take proper action!

All dogs can become over-heated. But, our flat-faced dogs, known as Brachycephalic breeds, are more prone to heat problems. Bully-bodied Brachycephalic dogs are even more prone to heat issues.

This booklet shares how to tell when any dog is getting too hot, regardless of nose length. No nose-length shaming allowed!

What action to take if your dog does get too hot is covered. Most importantly, we will share how to prevent your dog, of any breed, from overheating!

We are working on a variety of breed specific books that go into more detail. We look forward to sharing them with you soon.

Now let's dig into how to keep your dog calm, cool and breathing freely!

The Signs of Over-Heating

It's easy to tell the French Bulldog on the left is hot. Brachycephalic (flat-faced) dogs have a distinctive look as they over heat.

The American Eskimo/Pom cross on the right is also over-heating, but it doesn't appear as extreme and could be overlooked or dismissed.

First Signs of Over-heating in Any Dog

- Panting
- Agitation & confusion
- Tongue swollen
- Eyes glassy
- Body feels warm
- Licking feet or their lips
- Inside of ears red or darker pink

The info-graphic on the next page shows what stages of a dog's overheating process looks like. Feel free to share the info-graphics. PDFs are available

Signs of Worsening Over-heating

- Panting louder
- Extremely agitated & frightened
- Tongue more swollen & darker
- Eyes glassier, redder, bulging

Critical Over-Heating

- Vomiting
- Terrified
- Dizziness
- Collapse
- Seizures
- Temperature $>103^{\circ}$ F

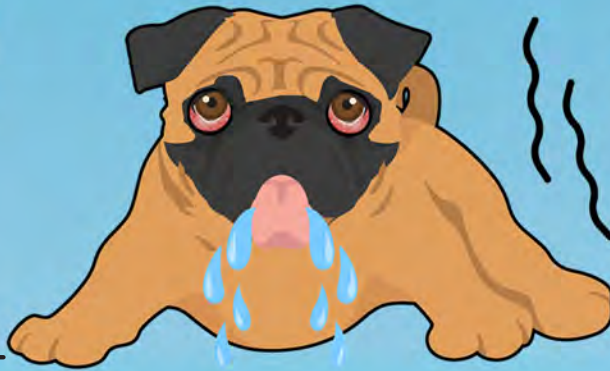
At this point the dog is in critical danger and veterinarian help is needed.



When Is My DOG TOO HOT?



Eyes Glassy & Blood-shot, Tongue Swollen & Red or Purplish



Drooling & Confused



Copious Drooling, Gums Red, Tongue Bigger & Dog is Agitated



Heart Racing, Legs Wobbly & Dog Is Very Frantic



Dizziness & Possible Seizures



Temperature >103° F, Collapse & Possible Death



Heavy Panting, Terrified & Vomiting

How To Keep Your Dog Cool When It's Hot

HOT HOT HOT!!!

As the climate gets hotter and hotter across most of the planet, we must shift our perceptions to be able to care for our dogs.

We can't change how our dogs react to the heat, but we can make them safe and more comfortable when it's hot and muggy.

Planning your dog's heat exposure during extreme heat can make it easier and safer for all. It may sound like a lot of hassle, but it soon becomes second nature.

Keep Your Dog Mentally & Physically Cool

The #1 tip for keeping your dog comfortable and breathing freely is to keep them cool.

PREVENTING overheating is easier and less stressful than dealing with an overheated dog.

Keeping them cool not only means physically cool, but also mentally calm.

Take steps to ensure your dog does not have the opportunity to get worked up into a panting frenzy. Dogs are often triggered by squirrels, the dog next door barking, the mail or UPS delivery person or, the trash collector. If you know when the mail carrier brings your mail, you can stop the frenzy causing behavior before it goes too far.

Move your dog to another room, crate them for a bit, watch some tv with them, etc.. Try anything positive to distract them from getting all wound up.

Of course, not all of us are stay-at-home dog parents. Try any of the following; white noise machine, TV left on to a bland channel, like HGTV House Hunters. But, if your dog barks every time someone says open floor plan try another channel. Many people report great suggest with the treat spitting machine/camera combos.

Try different things until you find something that works for your dog.

Keep Your Dog Physically Cool

- A/C and/or Fans
- Plan your day
- Keep their outdoor time to a minimum
- Use cool coats, pads+
- Ice, ice, baby

Air conditioning is your dog's best hot weather friend. If your home is not air conditioned get a window unit or one of the room-sized portable a/c units for one room. If a/c isn't possible, put a fan on the floor so they get the maximum effect.

Beating the Heat Tips

Do not take your dog outside in the heat of the day unless you absolutely have to. Even dogs that are acclimated to summer temperatures may not be good with the higher temperatures we're experiencing.

Walks should be early in the day and later in the evening when it is cooler.

Reschedule any non-emergency appointments for your dog if it is HOT.

Be quick on any excursions out in the awful hot mugginess. If you have to drive with them, have the a/c going and the vehicle

cooled off before you get in with them. Keep them out of direct sun and point as many a/c vents onto your dog as possible.

If going on a longer trip keep a bag of ice in a cooler in case your a/c goes out. Your dog can lie on a towel over the bag of ice.



One more time! If you do not HAVE to take your dog with you in the heat...DON'T TAKE THEM!



#1 Most important tip - Don't let them overheat. Keep your dog cool mentally and physically and you've got it made in the shade!*

#2 NEVER leave your flat-faced dog in a car alone. Not only can they quickly overheat, the danger of their being stolen is real. Don't even worry about what temperatures are safe for dogs in cars, they aren't safe from dog thieves anytime of the year. Alone in the car is a Hard No.

#3 Don't trust your car's A/C if you're tempted to ignore Rule #2.

#4 Walk your flat-faced dog early am or later pm when temps are lower (or skip the walk). No long summer hikes. Period.

#5 Going to the beach? Leave your brachycephalic dog at home. Most overheat easily & swim like bowling balls. It's for their own good, plus you'll have more fun not worrying about them getting overheated.

#6 Don't leave your flat-faced dog unattended in the yard when it's hot. Stay out with them. Not only can they get worked up over a random squirrel or noise and overheat, but dog thefts are occurring daily now.

#7 Use what's available - cool coats, wraps, pads, room a/c units, kiddie pools, mister spray bottles. Try new ideas and see what works for your dog.

* We know. We repeat this tip over and over again. You may see it again before you finish reading this PDF.



Focus On Flat-Faced Dogs

The fact they ARE flat-faced dogs causes breathing issues to a degree. Obviously, a dog with a flat face and shortened nose will not be able to cool the air they breathe in as easily as their Collie cousins.



Our job is to take whatever steps need to be taken to adjust our lifestyle and activities to our particular dog's comfort level.

Gentle snoring or a sweet little snort is cute, but listening to our dogs struggle to catch their breath as they wheeze is definitely NOT CUTE. Imagine your dog's fear when they struggle to breathe as their throat closes.

To create the desired baby-faced dog, we, as in humankind, have squashed the breathing structure of a dog's head with a functioning nose and neck length, like a

Doberman Pinscher, into a skull that is virtually a round ball on a short, stubby neck, like a Pug or Bulldog.

It is precisely as it sounds, extra throat tissue is forced into a too-short neck, and excess nasal tissue is crammed into a non-existent muzzle. This is called redundant throat tissue.

Redundant throat tissue causes bully Brachy breeds have more breathing issues than more moderate Brachy breeds.

The Bully Brachy breeds get a double whammy of problem causing physical traits.

When a flat-faced dog overheats, the extra or redundant throat tissue swells up and shuts off their breathing. Their over-sized tongue and elongated soft palette also swell, compromising their breathing even more.

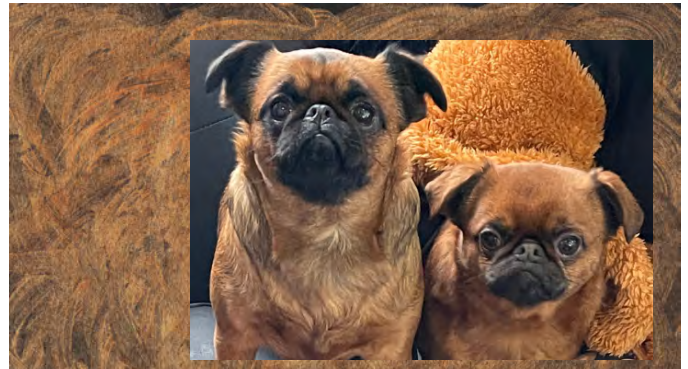
Plus, their stenotic nares don't allow them to pull in enough air to breathe freely. Of course, they pant harder and become terrified, agitated and panicky, quickly making it worse.

Without immediate proper care, your dog's throat can completely swell shut, causing them to choke and eventually die. If they survive, there can be long-term or issues caused by the lack of oxygen to the brain.

Author's Note: My two smooth Brussels Griffons (Also Brachy) have even flatter faces than most French Bulldogs. Their little noses

are right up between their eyes. But, they tear around their three-acre play yard without wheezing or struggling to breathe.

The relative ease of breathing, even under exertion, is due to the absence of the bully-throated redundant throat tissue.



Body Types DO Matter!

The Sumo wrestler in the image above is NOT built for running marathons or sprinting. The Bodybuilder would struggle to be competitive as a gymnast or yoga instructor and our swimsuit model would not make it with the Minnesota Vikings or the Minnesota Wild (look I used a sports analogy!).

So, guess which dog was bred to live in the mountains of Tibet? Which was bred to chase small game through the desert? Which were bred to hang onto enraged bulls? Which were bred to cuddle?

When people say, "You can do anything if you try hard enough," I always think how no amount of tenacity or training would give me Olympic medal winning skills in ANYTHING. Sometimes we have to admit our limitations. Back to our dogs...



IT HAPPENED! Your Dog Over-Heated

Sometimes, despite all of your precautions it happens, your dog gets overheated.

First, let's review the signs of over-heating so you can react as quickly as possible.

Signs of Over-Heating Distress

- 1) Tongue out & curled
- 2) Eyes glassy and bulging
- 3) Ears back
- 4) Heavy panting
- 5) Raspy breathing
- 6) Refusal to walk
- 7) Stressed and anxious

Get your dog out of the heat as quickly as possible, take them inside into a/c, a car with a/c, under a fan or in a shaded area.

Cool them down by applying cool, not cold, towels or cloths to their body. Cool their ears, paws, belly and throat first.

Put them in a sink or tub of cool, not cold water, to bring their temperature down. If outdoors and you only have access to a stream or lake, if it is safe, take them into the water. Remember keep their collar and leash on.

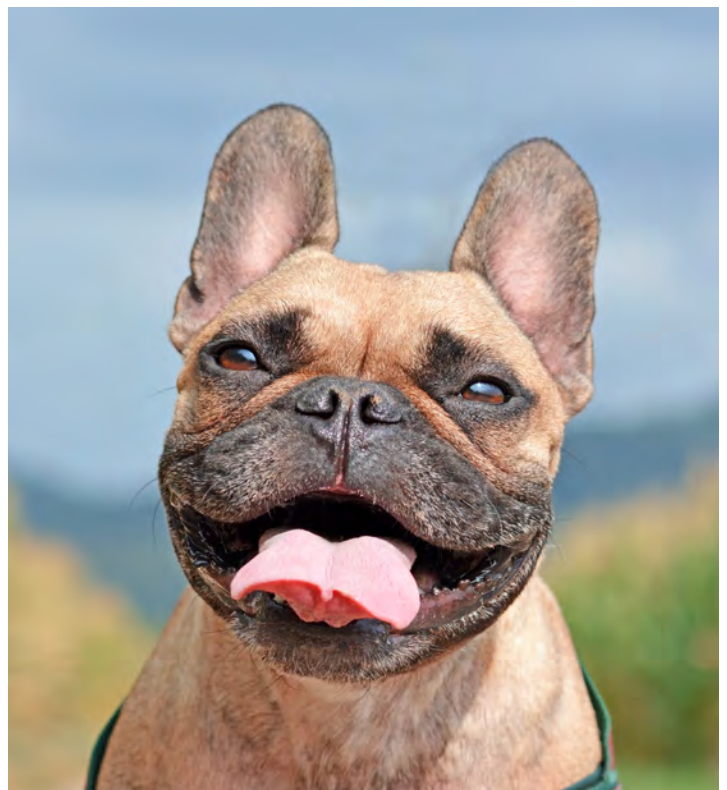
Offer small amounts of cool water to drink. Let ice cubes melt and they will lick at them. Do NOT push ice cubes into your over-heated dog's rectum. At first, it sounds possibly feasible, but upon another thought...no. Just NO. It doesn't work.

As soon as your dog seems to be coming around and back to their usual self, contact your veterinarian to see if follow-up care is needed.

If your dog does not respond favorably and start to seem more comfortable within 15-20 minutes, contact your veterinarian or one in the area you are in. Get them to the vet as safely and quickly as you can.

If at all possible, have someone go with you and let them drive so you can watch your dog.

This last bit of advice is tough, but stay calm. Your calm vibe helps calm your stressed and frightened dog.



Chanel and the Hot Hike of Horror

A tale of how being prepared is the only way to go!

At the last minute you decided to take your Frenchie, Chanel, with you to the nearby lake. There is a tree-covered hiking trail and it is usually not busy during the week. It was a nice day, a bit of a breeze and in the seventies. You grabbed Chanel's Blissfully Cool Go Bag, filled the two water bottles and a couple of ice packs, tossed them in it, jumped in your car and the two of you were off for a much-needed day of FUN.

When you got there, parking near the hiking trail was all full, so you parked a bit father back. Chanel, looking ever-so stylish in her new pink collar trotted happily beside you. She did start to pant as you got closer to the trail, so you picked up the pace to get under the trees faster.

The two of you started down the trail, happy for some shade. You'd only been walking for 10-15 minutes and turned a corner and saw an unexpected sight. There must have been a storm, as several trees had blown over and the rangers had cut them down to prevent injuries to hikers. A long section of the trail was now in full sunlight. Chanel seemed happy, so you carried on.

After another 10-15 minutes you looked at Chanel and realized she was panting more and her eyes were a little glassy and bugged out a bit. You stopped to pet her and she felt hot. Oh no, she was beginning to overheat! You found a tree and poured water into her Blissful Dog bowl and on her belly. She drank it, but didn't seem to be a lot better. You grabbed the cooling towel out of her Blissfully Cool Go Bag, soaked it with water and wrapped it around her.

Chanel is a bit of a chonk and weighs in the 25# range. You could carry her, but weren't able to go very quickly. She was agitated and panting harder, so you picked up the pace as best you could. It seemed like forever, but you saw your car just ahead!

You started the car and blasted the a/c to cool

the car off before the two of you got in. You looked at your cell phone and had one bar... arggh. As soon as the car was cool enough you put her on the floorboard on a sweatshirt that was in your car and poured water over her and the sweatshirt, and gave her more to drink.

You drove as fast as you safely could and stopped at the first gas station you saw. There was a nice guy sitting out front and you asked if he would keep an eye on your car if you left it running. He agreed to and you trusted that he would. Scared you, but what could you do? You ran in, bought more water and two bags of ice. You asked the clerk if they knew where the closest vet was and luckily they did and even offered to call for you. You thanked them profusely and ran with your ice to the car.

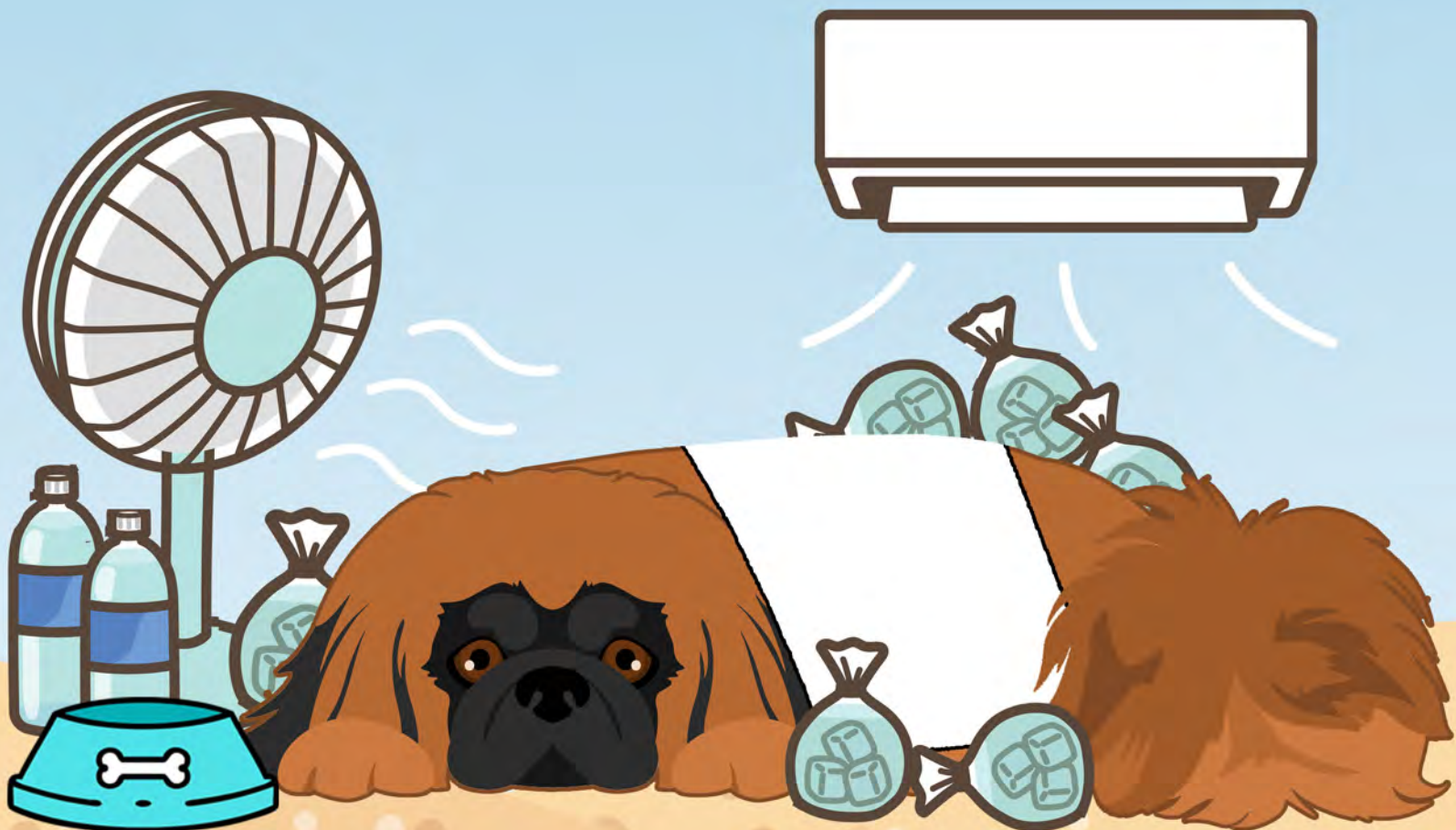
You continued to pour water over Chanel and offered her some in her bowl. A few minutes later you were at the vet clinic and you exhaled a big sigh of relief. After a quick examination the vet pronounced her good to go home. The vet congratulated you on doing everything right. You were so grateful you had learned what to do in case of over-heating!

Story is 100% fabricated by Kathy.



Kwik Kool Your Dog

- #1 Stay calm - take a deep breath - you've got this
- #2 Get them out of sun/heat into shade/inside/car under a fan or a/c
- #3 Wet them down with cool water, paws, throat, ears first
- #4 Offer cool, not cold, water for them to drink
- #5 If possible, run cool, not cold, water in the sink or tub and stand them in it
- #6 Garden hose, buckets of water, etc. will suffice
- #7 Place bags of ice under & around them
- #8 Take rectal temperature. (If over 106° F get to nearest vet's office ASAP)
- #9 Continue until they show signs of becoming calmer
- #10 If they do not respond within five minutes call nearest veterinarian
- #11 Contact your vet for aftercare
- #12 Keep your dog calm for a few days, as this experience is draining
- #13 Do not push ice up their rectum, this will not help [old wives's tale]

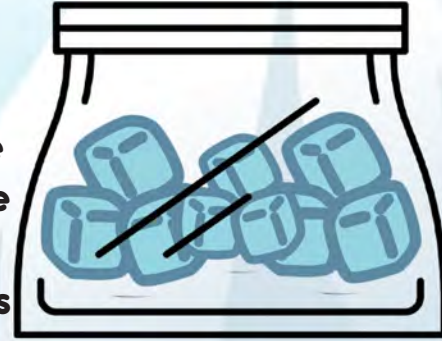


ICE ICE BABYYYY!!!



DIY Ice Packs

- Soak sponge with water
- Put sponge in zip-lock bags & freeze
- Fill zip-lock bags with water & freeze
- Wrap in towel, tea towel, t-shirt etc.
- Or use packs of frozen veggies (peas are best)



Store Bought Ice Pack* Reuse Bottles

- Choose the style you like
- Brick style lasts a long time & are tough for power chewers
- Tell friends, co-workers & family you'll take any freezer packs they can share

* Yeah, I'm country, I still say store bought

- Old School - Fill any empty clean & safe plastic water/drink bottle with water & freeze
- Use size appropriate to dog's size

If needed, wrap in tea towel, t-shirt etc. and put under dog



Your Dog Is Counting On You!

For **HOT WEATHER** Safety



Leave Dogs at home
if over 80° F



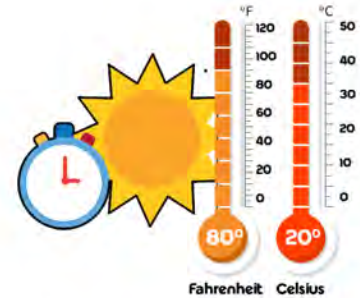
Never EVER Leave
Dogs alone in cars



Always have water &
water bowls in car



Act immediately if
your dog has any signs
of over-heating!



Monitor sun's position,
the temperature & how
your dog is handling the
heat constantly

It is **MUCH** safer to
keep your dog cool
rather than have to
cool down an
over-heated dog!



Using Cool Pads & Coats

Use cool coats, cooling pads and/or wet towels to help keep your dog cool. In a pinch a wet-t shirt will do.

There are a lot of different cooling garments on the market now. The key is getting your dog used to them before you need to use it.

Your dog may be one of those genius canines who walks over to the new cool pad and gently lowers their belly onto it and sighs with cool relief. Or they can be like the rest of our dogs and act like you're trying to kill them with the carefully researched expensive cooling pad.

When you first get the cool pad put it across their back, hold it under their belly, pop it in their crate under the normal crate pad. Let them get used to the smell and the different material and feel of the cooling pad. Lots of praise will help. Before you know it the light bulb will flicker and come on as they realize the pad offers relief from the heat.

Cool coats and wraps are easier, as you put them on your dog to wear until you take them off. Let them wear it for short periods on the first few warm days to get acclimated.

Cool Coat by Ellen Kozak | <https://www.facebook.com/ellen.kozak1> or email Ellen@Kozak.net





Summer Can Be FUN Again!

You love taking your dog with you everywhere you can and they love going with you. Now you have some real world guidelines to help you know how to handle summer fun with your fave friend.

Here's the scoop on our Blissfully Cool Dog Kit mentioned in Chanel's story.

<https://theblissfuldog.com/collections/collection-of-collections/products/blissfully-cool-combo-kit>



Remember this. Sometimes the safest, least stressful decision is to leave your dog at home or with a trusted caretaker. You knew I'd say it one more time. Right?

Feel free to share the info-graphics with dog friends, clubs, organizations, etc. The usual caveats abide; don't alter them, don't sell them or any part.

Now go forth and have some summer fun!
Blissfully,

Kathy

Kathy Dannel Vitcak
CEO & Founder | The Blissful Dog Inc.







Bliss. . .

