



4th of July Safety

The 4th of July is the busiest time of year for animal shelters and rescue organizations. Dogs who panic at fireworks overwhelm the shelters, while rescue groups scramble to save dogs whose owners don't claim them. Here are some tips to keep your dog safe.

- Make sure your dog is in a safe, escape-proof place! Keep him inside the house, in his own familiar home, where he feels secure.
- Prepare a den for your dog, where he can feel safe. A crate is ideal, if he's used to one. If you don't have a crate, cover a table with a blanket or put his bed in a comfortable, secure place.
- Turn the radio or TV on loud to drown out the scary sounds.
- Close the curtains and turn on the lights so the flashing fireworks won't be so bright.
- Tire him out late in the afternoon – take him for a long walk, play fetch or tug, or let him play with a dog friend.
- Feed him dinner before the fireworks start. Add some cooked white rice to his meal. A tummy full of carbs can help him rest.
- Take him outside to go potty before the fireworks start.
- Stay home with him – your presence will make him feel more secure.
- Make sure he's wearing his collar and ID tag! If he does get lost, contact us immediately so we can keep our eyes open for him.
- Give him a yummy, chewie treat, such as a Kong stuffed with peanut butter and biscuits, or play a game with him to occupy his attention during the fireworks.
- Plug in a dispenser or air freshener with the scent of calming essential oils (e.g., lavender) or D.A.P. (dog appeasing pheromone.)
- Remember that he'll pick up on your mood. Stay calm! Be cheerful! Show him that nothing's wrong.
- Try to ignore fearful behavior. Reward calm, relaxed behavior with pets and treats.

DO NOT:

- Let him outside in the yard during fireworks!
- Take him to a fireworks show (even if you leave him in the car.)
- Punish him – it will make him more anxious.
- Leave him alone – dogs are pack animals and need the security of their pack.
- Fuss over him or try to reassure him – it will reward his fearful behavior and make him more likely to continue.

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