



A dog left in a car on a warm summer day can overheat in as little as 10 minutes. Even cracking the windows is not enough to keep a dog safe. Cars are like ovens and dogs can't let themselves out!

It is best to leave your pet at home or have someone stay with your dog in the car. If it gets too hot, you can head for shade and a cool water break. Always travel with water. Heatstroke signs in dogs include hard panting, muscle twitching, an anxious or dazed look and even vomiting. Heatstroke is serious and requires veterinary attention.

Take action! You can remind others about the "hot car" danger. Print copies of our "dogs in hot cars" poster at [spca.bc.ca/hotdogs](http://spca.bc.ca/hotdogs). Put them up around your neighbourhood at stores and malls. Ask permission before you post.

Phew! It's a scorcher!

Hey, is that dog stuck in the car?

I guess this hamster needs to be moved away from the window.

You're right, Fin. Small animals can overheat too.

Hey, that bulldog looks super tired.

I've got some water. She can have some of mine.

Mmmm...

ILLUSTRATION: SCOT RITCHIE

Flat-faced dog breeds such as bulldogs, pugs and Pekingese can really suffer in hot weather. Air doesn't flow well through their noses so they can't cool themselves as well as dogs with longer muzzles.

On all summer dog outings, carry extra water with a cup dogs can drink from. Take frequent breaks. Remember that just because your dog is keeping up with you, doesn't mean he isn't suffering.

Running with a dog on a hot day can't be a smart idea.

You're right. Dogs quickly overheat, especially wearing that fur coat.

When we run we sweat. As the passing air evaporates it helps keep us cool. That's why we seem to get hotter when we stop.

Dogs don't sweat like us. They cool themselves by panting and by releasing heat through their foot pads. Making it worse, dogs are wearing a fur coat all the time! Plus, the hot pavement hurts their sensitive paws.

It is best to exercise pets in the early morning and evening, when it is cooler. Always bring extra water for your dog and take lots of breaks.

Gerbils, hamsters, guinea pigs and other rodents can get too hot if left near a window in summer weather. Move them to a cooler place. Remember,

an aquarium with glass sides can be much warmer inside than a cage with wire sides. Make sure they have good air flow but don't use blue ice packs in their habitats. They may chew them. Ice in a dish is perfect and provides some extra cooling on hot days.

At least indoor cats don't suffer in the heat.

Not true, Fin. Cats and rabbits can overheat too.

Cats also pant to stay cool. They will lick themselves too. The evaporating saliva helps them stay cool. Using a fan keeps air moving. Cats will like this. They will also seek out a cool surface — a hardwood or tile floor — and lay there. Some people put freezer packs under their cats' beds to make a cool, soft place for their fiery felines.

Rabbits don't pant but use their ears to cool themselves. They really need good ventilation (a fan) to keep cool. You can also add a bag of frozen water (not blue ice packs) wrapped in their bedding.

