

Get Your Pets Winter Ready

Pet Sitters International offers pet owners tips to prep pets for the cold, winter weather.

Compliments of The Critter Sitter



The change of seasons doesn't just affect people-it also affects pets. And the harsh conditions that winter brings can quickly threaten your pet's health and well being.

Before Jack Frost starts nipping at your dog or cat's nose, The Critter Sitter encourages you to make these preparations to keep pets healthy, comfortable and safe when the temperature dips:

- ___ Plan to keep all young, old and short-haired pets inside. These types of pets are more vulnerable to cold weather and should not be left outside for long and without supervision.
- ___ Provide shelter for any pets that are left outside. Add straw for additional insulation from the cold and provide a snug, warm bed that does not sit directly on the ground.
- ___ Be sure to leave extra food and water in plastic bowls for any pets that are left outside.
- ___ Learn the signs and symptoms of [frostbite](#) and [hypothermia](#). Contact your veterinarian immediately if you suspect your pet is suffering from either of these conditions.
- ___ Clip the long hair on the bottom of your dog's feet before the snow and ice fall. This will prevent the build up of ice balls which can be painful and difficult to remove.
- ___ Plan to trim your pet's nails regularly during the winter. Pets may have a difficult time trying to maintain solid footing in icy conditions with long nails.
- ___ Find a warm place for your pets to sleep. All pets, including small caged pets, need to be kept warm and away from drafts.
- ___ Place pet-safe wipes by the door. Ice-melting chemicals and salt can irritate and burn the pads of your pet's paws. Thoroughly wipe off your pet's paws when they come inside.
- ___ Use antifreeze and other household chemicals that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol, which is extremely poisonous to pets.
- ___ Get in the habit of banging on the hood of your car before starting the engine. Cats and wildlife seek warmth and climb into the engine during the cold, winter months.
- ___ Should winter travel plans keep you away from home and your pets, make sure to book the services of a professional pet sitter in advance to ensure your pets are safe and happy while you're away.

