



Tony La Russa's  
**Animal  
Rescue  
Foundation**

## Cold Weather Tips

Keep your pets warm and safe all winter long

The best strategy, of course, is to keep your pets indoors during inclement weather. When you do venture outdoors with your dog, keep them on-leash. Snow and rain can wipe away familiar scents, causing your dog to become lost or disoriented. If you live in a very cold area, unsupervised dogs also run the risk of falling through thin ice near ponds or other frozen bodies of water.

A fur coat isn't all the protection your pet needs from the cold, especially if she is short-coated, a puppy, or a senior. She might be much more comfortable in some warm winter-wear, such as a sweater, jacket, or booties. Look for coats or sweaters that cover from neck to tail and aren't restrictive or uncomfortable. When indoors, be sure she has a warm, draft-free spot to rest in with lots of bedding. And to keep her skin and coat in tip-top shape from the dry winter air, brush her more frequently than usual, and never shave a long-coated dog during the winter.



Wrapping your pet up in an electric blanket all day might sound like a good idea, but leaving an animal unattended with an electric item is a recipe for disaster. SnuggleSafe Pet Heating Pads can be warmed in the microwave and retain heat for 12 hours.

When it's cold or rainy out, pets might resist going to the bathroom outside. Work with them to try to keep them comfortable while they do their business - a jacket or rain slicker might help, as would holding an umbrella over them to keep them dry.

When the temperature drops, chilly kitties will look for any warm place to curl up. This includes under the hoods of cars where they can be seriously injured or killed when the car starts. A trick to evict stowaways is to bang on the hood of your car loudly a few times before you enter. Any slumbering felines will be frightened by the noise and escape before you start your car.

You should never leave your pet unattended in a car on a cold day. The winter weather turns your car into a rolling refrigerator - great for keeping your groceries chilled, but terrible for keeping your pet safe. If it's cold outside, leave your animals warm and safe at home.

When coming in from a winter walk or play session, dry your pet off thoroughly and take extra care to wipe her legs, paws, and stomach. Pets in snowy climates can pick up salt, antifreeze, or other dangerous chemicals on their pads and lick them off, making them sick.

Pets should not be kept outside during the cold months. However, if you absolutely must leave them outdoors for a limited amount of time, create a shelter for them to retreat to. It should be dry, clean, and well-insulated, and protect them from the wind and elements. And be sure to frequently check their water bowl to be sure they have plenty of fresh (not frozen) H<sub>2</sub>O.

Animals with fragile immune systems - including kittens, puppies, and senior pets - might be more susceptible to illness during the change of seasons. If you suspect your animal has a cold weather-related illness, take them to see the vet right away.

For more resources on pet care and behavior, visit Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation at [www.arf.net](http://www.arf.net)