

**4 Common Doggy Dangers to Avoid if You Want a Safe, Happy Pooch**

Compared to humans (and children, particularly), dogs seem indestructible. They can pretty much eat anything and be okay. They can take a licking and keep on ticking, if you will. Dogs play rough and come out of it with nary a scratch. While it’s true that dogs are quite resilient, there are some doggy dangers out there that, while common, are often overlooked by owners. Here’s how to ensure your beloved pooch stays safe and happy.

**Careful what they chew on**

If your dog gets a [bowel obstruction](http://www.akc.org/content/health/articles/bowel-obstruction-in-dogs-symptoms-treatment-and-prevention/), the worst-case scenario is death. The best-case scenario is hundreds or thousands of dollars in medical bills. Bottom line: you want to avoid this [common medical problem](http://www.pethealthnetwork.com/dog-health/dog-diet-nutrition/does-your-dog-have-appetite-life) at all costs.

It’s highly unlikely that your dog will develop a blockage from food, nylabones, rawhide, or any other “dog-approved” food or chew toy. What is likely to cause one are things like chicken bones, trash, and cloth (think socks, underwear, and chewed-up blankets). If you think it’s harmless that your dog has a favorite sock of yours that you’ve just given up on, think again.

**What lurks in the yard**

Dogs like to dig in the yard, and they like to chew on plants. This is never going to change. So if you’re unsure about what kind of plants lurk in your yard, it’s time you figure it out. There are dozens and dozens of common household plants (both inside and out) that can harm dogs. If you have a curious pooch, you should certainly watch out for azaleas, castor, chinaberry, daylily, foxglove, nightshade, wisteria, and velvet grass. The list of possibly poisonous plants is extensive. Check [here](http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/pets/poisonous_plants.pdf) for more information.

**The dog park**

For many dogs and dog owners, the dog park is the main form of physical exercise on a daily or weekly basis. There’s nothing wrong with this. Playing at a dog park is a high-intensity activity that is very good for your dog’s body and mind. But you have to be careful.

The aforementioned fact that the dog park is the sole exercise option for many dog owners is what makes it a somewhat dangerous place. It’s recommended that you walk your dog before taking them to the dog park, as dogs with absolutely no outlet other than the dog park can exhibit increasingly aggressive, rough play. Even if your dog is well-behaved, he can be at risk from an overactive dog and a neglectful owner.

Do your part by training your dog to have [proper public etiquette](https://www.redfin.com/blog/how-to-train-dogs-public-manners-at-home). This means following basic commands, not jumping on/being rough with other dogs or humans, and knowing the difference between playtime and every other time. Let your dog lead by example.

**That nice summer day**

We all know not to leave our dogs in our cars on a hot day. Temperatures inside cars can reach deadly heights within minutes. But many dog owners fail to appreciate the dangers of the sun on a normal day at the park or in their own backyard.

All dogs are particularly [susceptible to heatstroke](https://www.petmd.com/dog/centers/nutrition/slideshows/signs-of-heat-stroke-in-dogs). Dogs can’t sweat (hence all the panting), and their only mechanism for cooling themselves is finding an area of shade and drinking plenty of water. Be especially careful if your dog has a heavy coat (consider shearing some of it off!). Sunburn is also a major risk, especially for dogs with thin coats. It may sound strange to have to put sunscreen on your dog, but if you’re going out for a day in the sun, it’s absolutely vital!

Don’t make the mistake of thinking your dog can handle whatever, whenever. They are tough creatures, but not as tough as you think. Make sure you watch out for the dangers posed by plants, inedible objects, other hyper dogs, and the sun.

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