



Pavement Awareness



HOT PAVEMENT IS DANGEROUS FOR YOUR PET

For many, warm, sunny weather provides a great incentive to get outdoors. But it also brings its problems — such as roads melting and dogs getting their paws burnt on scorching hot pavements.

Many of our emergency vets have treated dogs who have been the victim of severe burns to their paws. However, a large number of these cases could have been avoided if owners had followed some simple safety advice.

SIMPLE RULES TO KEEP YOUR PET SAFE FROM HOT PAVEMENT

😊 **7 Seconds Rule:** make a simple test – place the back of your hand on the pavement surface for 7 seconds. If you struggle to hold it down, it's too hot to walk your dog.

You can usually rely on your dog to understand when the sun is growing dangerous to them, and they'll go scurrying towards some shade to pant away their discomfort. The exception comes when sunbathing though, and this is something that you'll need to keep an eye on.

😊 **20 Minutes Walk Rule:** Stick with the 20-minute rule, allowing your dog to get their exercise in and then bringing them back to the safety of home.

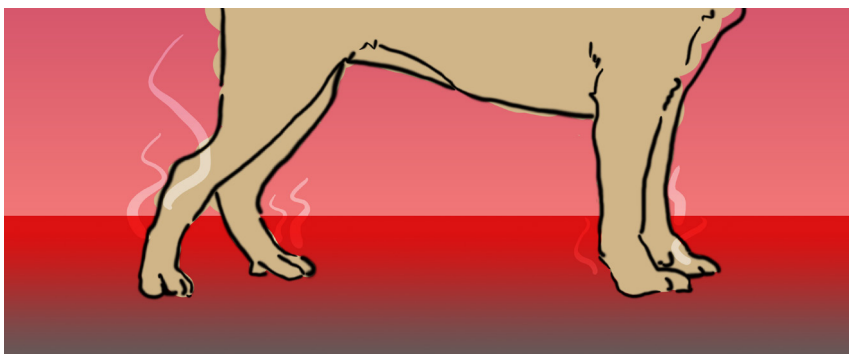
Walk your dog first thing in the morning, or later at night. Sure, that might eat into your sleep schedule, but that's a sacrifice you may need to make for your dog's safety. Keep out of the way of the sun as much as possible.

😊 **Use dog paw protection wax**

😊 **Don't walk multiple dogs at once:** this could be awkward if you have more than one dog, especially if they are large breeds that need plenty of exercise, as there are only so many hours in a day.

However, if you walk dogs as a pack, they're more likely to want to play together and stay out longer. If you can try to walk your dogs one at a time, they're more likely to do what they need to do and get home again as quickly as possible.

😊 **Exercise your dog indoors:** you might be surprised at how easy it can be to get your dog the appropriate mix of physical and mental stimulation. Do you know that, sometimes, mental jobs (e.g. intense concentration/focus) are making a dog almost same tired as outdoor exercises? Don't forget to regularly check your dog's paws!



How Hot IS Too Hot For Your Pet's Paws?

If the outside temperature is a pleasant 25°C (77°F), there's little wind and humidity is low, asphalt and tarmac can reach a staggering 52°C (125°F)!

This can rise to 62°C (143°F) when the mercury hits 31°C (87°F).

It's worth bearing in mind that an egg can fry in five minutes at 55°C (131°F) while skin destruction can occur in just one minute at 52°C (125°F).

The reason pavements get so hot is they soak up heat all day and then retain that heat.

Alternatives to walking on pavement

Dogs need exercise so if it's too hot to walk on the pavement then you might wonder how else you can provide the necessary energy exertion for your dog.



The most simple alternative to walking on pavement would be to walk on grass or soil. These surfaces do not heat up as much as the hard pavement and are typically safe to walk on. If there is no grass to walk on, consider swimming in a pond or lake, going on a “walk” inside the house, playing in a grassy yard, going to a dog park, or spending some time at doggy daycare.

HEAT STROKE RISK

Older and younger dogs, obese canines and those that struggle with their heart or lungs, are at particular risk of heat stroke.

The symptoms include the following:

- Excessive panting, drooling or slobbering
- Struggling to breathe
- Strange and irregular heartbeats – either too fast, or very slow
- Seizures and fits.
- Lack of coordination, including bumping into furniture and losing control of limbs
- Struggling to pee
- Vomiting blood, or finding traces of blood in the stool
- Uncharacteristic behavior, such as aggression or lethargy

DEHYDRATION RISK

Signs of dehydration include:

- Lethargy and Depression
- Loss of Appetite
- Sunken Eyes
- Rigid Skin
- Dry Mouth
- Changes in the color of your dog's urine
- Gums that appear to have changed color

Dehydration test:

Very gently pinch the flesh on the back of your dog's neck using your thumb and forefinger. If your dog is dehydrated, his or her skin will lack elasticity – meaning that the skin will take quite some time to revert back to its usual shape.

A collapsible bowl will come in very useful here, so you can offer constant hydration as you walk.

DID YOU KNOW?

While human beings gain and lose the majority of our body heat through our heads, the key to regulating a dog's temperature is their paws.

Have you noticed that even the most water-averse canines can't resist a splash and paddle in a river or stream on a scorching summer's day? This is because the cool water on their paws is hugely soothing.

This will not cure dehydration, so you'll still need to get your dog out of the tub and to the vet as quickly as possible. It should, however, cool your dog's body temperature to a more comfortable level, which may encourage them to drink a little more water and take the first steps to recovery themselves.



Homemade re-hydration solution:

1 liter mineral water
juice of 1 lemon

Boil up one liter of mineral water in the kettle, and pour it into a glass jug, squeeze the juice from a fresh lemon and pour this into the water.

Add the following ingredients :

3 tablespoons sugar (no artificial sweetener, especially Xylitol, which is toxic to dogs)

1 small teaspoon table salt

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Give everything a stir, allow the water to cool to a safe temperature, and serve it to your dog in their favorite water bowl.

Learn to recognize the symptoms of a dog with burned paw pads:

- Chewing or licking their feet
- Excessive tapping
- Limping
- Pulling if they are directed to walk on the hot pavement
- Blisters on the paw pads
- Cracking and other obvious damages on the paw

WHAT TO DO IF THE DOG PAW GOT BURNED?

To alleviate the pain, you can do the following steps:

- **Lift your dog instead of letting them walk back home**

This will prevent further damage and exposure to the hot pavement. Most dogs with paw burns will find it hard to walk, so give them a big favor by carrying them home.

- **Cool it down**

Once you're home, wash your dog's paws with cold water. You can also use a cold compress to cool down the burn and to prevent swelling.

- **Prevent your dog from chewing their paw**

Your dog will try to lick or chew its injured paw, which you have to prevent at all cost. If you need to put them on a cone, then be it.

- **Call the vet**

Some burns can be treated at home, but for worst cases, you need to call the vet right away. A visit to the vet is necessary for proper treatment and to prevent possible infections.



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