

# Household dangers

## Petproofing your home

Just as parents 'childproof' their home, so should pet owners 'petproof' theirs. Four-legged members of the family, like infants and small children, are naturally curious and love to explore their environment with their paws, claws and mouths. But they can't know what is dangerous and what is not... so it's up to you to make your home a safe haven. The following tips can help ensure that your pet enjoys a long, happy and accident-free life in your care.



### All around the house

- Screen windows to guard against falls.
- Don't let young pets out on balconies or high decks.
- Many house plants or floral arrangements, including Lilies/Liliaceae family, Dieffenbachia (dumbcane), Philodendrons, Ivy (various species), Creeping Charlie, Umbrella Plant and many more are extremely poisonous if eaten. Remove them or put them out of reach in hanging baskets.
- Rat bait is extremely tempting for dogs to eat, yet is highly poisonous and potentially fatal, and should not be accessible at any time.
- Puppies and kittens love to chew when they're teething, so unplug, remove or cover electrical cords.
- Don't leave a room where a fire is lit or a space heater is being used unattended.
- Plastic bags may be fun to play with, but they can suffocate.
- If your pet can put something in their mouth, they probably will. Don't leave small, sharp, easily swallowed objects lying around.

### In the garage

- Cats enjoy naps near a warm engine so, before you drive off, honk your horn and make sure your pet is not under or near the car.
- Pets like the smell and taste of antifreeze and windscreen washer. Tightly cover their containers and wipe up any spills.
- Paint, petrol and other dangerous chemicals should be stored out of reach.

### In the kitchen, laundry and bathroom

- Never leave hotplates or irons on unattended.
- Dangerous household chemicals such as bleach and ammonia should be stored out of your pet's reach.
- Close washing machine and dryer lids – your pet might climb in and become trapped.
- Keep toilet lids down – small pets can actually drown if they fall in.
- Medicines, shampoo, sunscreen and other personal care items can kill your pet. Make sure they can't get hold of them.

### Human food

- Some human foods such as chocolate, alcohol, corn on the cob, grapes, some nuts, onions and avocados can be very harmful to your pet. This list is not comprehensive, always consult your veterinary professional for nutritional advice.

### Out in the yard

- Some outdoor plants, like Brunfelsia (Yesterday Today & Tomorrow), Lilies, Ivy, Oleander, Azalea, Foxglove, Hydrangea, Morning Glory, Nightshade, Rhododendron, Yew and many more can be poisonous to pets. Many plants can also be responsible for allergies in our pets.
- Cane toads are very poisonous; the toxin they secrete, which usually occurs when your pet mouths the toad, can potentially cause convulsions and cardiac arrest.
- Keep pets away from lawns and gardens treated with snail bait or chemicals.
- Store garden tools, baits, fertilisers and chemicals securely. Keep garden sheds locked.
- Cover swimming pools, spas and ponds – your pet might fall in and not be able to get out.
- Keep pets away from spiders and snakes.



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## Avoiding cat-astrophes

- Many objects used as cat toys - yarn, string, rubber bands, aluminium foil – can be extremely harmful if swallowed.
- Cats love to sleep in warm, dark places, so close drawers, trunks and cupboards – your pet might suffocate if trapped.
- A cat looks adorable with a ribbon tied around its neck... but it could get caught and choke your pet.

## Dog-gone disasters

- Eliminate hooks or similar objects placed at your dog's shoulder height – their collar or harness could become tangled and they could choke.
- Keep used fish-hooks out of reach as they are commonly swallowed or chewed on by dogs. They can pierce the dog's skin or worse, it's intestines if swallowed. Major surgery can be required in some cases to remove the hook.
- A tall perimeter or invisible electrical fence around your property will minimise the risk of your dog running out into traffic or roaming far from home.

## Home for the holidays

- Tinsel and icicles, Christmas tree lights and glass ornaments will be sure to tempt your pet's curiosity – but all could be lethal if chewed or swallowed.
- Poinsettia, Holly and Mistletoe are poisonous to your pets.

