

Keep your pet safe during halloween

Your idea of Halloween fun may be ducking trick-or-treaters at home with the lights off or parading your pet in costume up and down the neighborhood streets. Either way, here are some tips to keep your cat, dog, or other animal safe during this holiday.



✓ DO protect pets from pranks.

Don't leave animals unattended outdoors on Halloween, the day before, or the day after. Cruel pranksters can hurt your animals, especially black cats.

✗ DON'T feed candy to animals.

Treats that are delicious for children and adults can be harmful or fatal to pets. They can choke on the wrappers, and chocolate is poisonous to dogs and cats. Put Halloween candy in scent-proof baggies, and put a lid on your candy cauldron next to the door.

✓ **DO keep pets away from lit pumpkins.** Spooky colored candles and jack o' lanterns can singe pets' noses and light fur on fire. Keep animals and lit objects apart.

✗ DON'T put a reluctant pet in a Halloween costume.

Some cats and dogs don't mind a few Halloween accessories, but don't force an anxious animal into a constricting outfit. Make sure any Halloween clothes let your pet breathe, hear, see, and move freely.

✓ **DO license your pet early.** You can do your best to keep your pet indoors this Halloween, but your cat or dog may speed past a gaggle of candy-seeking kids into the night. Be sure you've registered your pet with the city and attached up-to-date identification tags to your pet's collar.

✗ DON'T mix pets and trick-or-treaters at the front door.

Cats and dogs can frighten children, and vice versa. Put your pets behind a closed door when costumed kids come knocking. This will also prevent your pet from bolting outside during the many times the front door is opened and closed.

Last, if you won't be home with the pets this Halloween, be sure they're comfortable in the house. There may be a lot of doorbell ringing, screaming children, and noises that can spook pets. Consider keeping cats and dogs in rooms in the back of the house and turning on some background noise like a radio or TV.