

## Household Dangers

### Pet proofing 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, upper porches or high decks.
- Many house plants, including dieffenbachia, elephant ear, spider plants and more are poisonous if eaten. Remove them or put them out of reach in hanging baskets.
- 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 his mouth, he 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 windshield washer. Tightly cover their containers and wipe up any spills.
- Paint, gasoline and other dangerous chemicals should be stored out of reach.

### In the kitchen, laundry room & bathroom

- Never leave burners or irons on unattended.
- Dangerous household chemicals such as bleach and ammonia should be stored out of your pet's reach.

- Close washer 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, suntan lotions and other personal care items can kill your pet. Make sure he can't get hold of them.

## Out in the yard

- Some outdoor plants, like ivy and oleander, can be poisonous to pets.
- Keep pets away from lawns and gardens treated with chemicals.
- Store garden tools and chemicals securely. Keep garden sheds locked.
- Cover swimming pools and hot tubs – your pet might fall in and not be able to get out.

## Avoiding cat-astrophes

- Many objects used as cat toys – yarn, string, rubber bands, aluminum foil – can be extremely harmful if swallowed.
- Cats love to sleep in warm, dark places, so close drawers, trunks and closets – 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.

## 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.
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