



## Halloween Safety Tips

Halloween can be a fun for the whole family, but can also be stressful and dangerous for your canine companion. Your dog may be exposed to many unfamiliar sights and sounds, especially with the array of scary costumes available. The whole family should consider the following points to ensure the safety of your dog during this festival.

- With all the sweets and treats around at this time, do keep your dog away, especially from chocolate and raisins as these are toxic to dogs. Chocolate contains theobromine which can be lethal – the darker the chocolate the higher amounts of theobromine. Do contact your vets immediately if you suspect your dog has eaten these food items – especially if you see any of the following symptoms; vomiting, a sore abdomen, excessive thirst, excitability, drooling, slow heart rate or convulsions
- Unfamiliar sights and sounds can lead to nervous responses such as cowering, playtime 'frenzy', and possible aggression –taking your dog for a walk earlier in the day may mean he has less energy to react to trick or treaters in the evening
- Provide a quiet and cosy familiar place in the house for your dog to retreat to so he is less likely to be exposed to trick or treaters – this may include a favourite room or play pen. Provide him with chew toys, his favourite blanket or a comfort item
- Do not force your dog to receive any unwanted attention, even from family members, as they may not recognise even their owner if in costume, and may be very uneasy
- Never force your dog to wear a dog costume if he is uncomfortable with this. Especially do not put anything on him if it inhibits the use of his senses, hence do not cover up his eyes, nose or ears
- Be careful of decorations such as costume accessories as some parts may easily become loose and your dog may choke or become tangled up. Lit candles or pumpkins can easily harm your companion – keep these items out of reach and do not leave your dog unattended with such items
- Think twice about taking your dog on a trick or treating outing, as the extra excitement around the event or added attention from strangers may make cause distress. Also other dogs may not be too welcoming of another dog on their territory
- Do not leave your dog in the garden, especially if there is easy access – people may make use of the anonymity to tease, poison or even steal your dog! Do not leave him alone in a car!
- Be extra careful when opening the door to any visitors as your dog may escape. He is more likely to run away if he is frightened by Halloween costumes

Please keep a watch over your dog this Halloween to reduce any chance of distress, so that he and the rest of the family can enjoy the celebrations without any foreseeable accidents.

If you have any particular concerns about your dog's behaviour do speak to your vet who should also be able to advise or recommend a local dog behaviourist

You may also be interested in other factsheets from Dogs Trust which can be found at [www.dogstrust.org.uk](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk)

*For more information about Dogs Trust, to become a member, sponsor a long-term resident or help us in our campaigns please call 020 7837 0006 or write to:  
Dogs Trust, 17 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7RQ.  
[www.dogstrust.org.uk](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk)*

*Registered Charity No. 227523*

*Dogs Trust © 2006. This factsheet is copyrighted. All rights reserved. You may print this factsheet for your own information and photocopy it if multiple copies are required. You may not sell it, reproduce it on the Internet, or reprint it in any publication without permission from Dogs Trust Legal Department.*