

## Dog Pool Safety

**Take these three steps to safely introduce your dog to the water.**

Even a covered pool can threaten the safety of a dog that can't swim.

"Many people don't realize a dog can get under the pool cover or fall right through it," says Kathy Kern, owner of Animal Fitness Center, a physical rehabilitation clinic that focuses on in-pool canine therapy. "If you have a pool, you should teach your dog where the pool stairs are, how to stay afloat, and how to get out."

"Not an easy task, as most dogs except for a few water-loving breeds (such as the Portuguese Water Dog) don't have the faintest idea what to do in a pool," Kern says.

Take these 3 steps to introduce your dog to the water:

1. Go in the shallow end of the pool with your dog and hold it beneath its pelvis.
2. Keep its hindquarters up and its head above the water.
3. Be patient until your dog feels comfortable in the water.

"The key is not to let the dog panic," Kern says. "If the dog panics, it will splash around too much, its backside will drop, and the dog will sink. Once it can learn to get over that initial panic and paddle to the edge, the dog will be fine."