

8 Tips for a Safe Halloween With Your Dog

Dogs take part more and more in the evening's fun. Learn how to keep them safe.

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Dressing a dog in a Halloween costume has come out of America's closet, so to speak. A recent survey by the American Kennel Club showed that one in ten dog owners plan to dress up their dog on Halloween. Almost half of those surveyed liked the idea even if they weren't planning to dress up their dog.

But the trick is not to treat Halloween as just another day for your dog. Whether your dog dons a frightening frock or not, the AKC reminds owners to follow certain guidelines for keeping your pet safe during Halloween:

- 1) Supervise your costumed dog at all times. Make sure the costume fits properly and doesn't impede his breathing, eyesight, or hearing. If your dog swallows any elastic or decorative items, it could cause intestinal obstructions or choking.
- 2) Chocolate and sweets are not treats for your dog. A dog's digestive system is not adapted for sweets, and chocolate contains theobromine, which can be harmful and sometimes fatal to your dog.
- 3) Walk your dog while it is still light outside. Your dog may find candy, wrappers, and broken eggs on lawns and streets. Make sure that these tempting treats stay out of reach.
- 4) Children in costumes can frighten dogs. Make sure pets are in a safe and secure room when you answer the door to prevent them from running out, getting hurt and frightening your visitors.
- 5) Keep your dog on a leash if you want him to greet trick-or-treaters. Your dog may be stressed by the noise, activity or simply the interruption of his normal routine.
- 6) Don't leave your dog unattended in the front or back yard on Halloween. Pranksters may target your dog with eggs, and passersby may be tempted to give your dog harmful treats and candy.
- 7) If you are having a Halloween party, consider confining your dog securely in one area of the house. Leave a radio or TV and lights on for your pet.
- 8) Be careful about where you place candles and Jack-o-Lanterns. They can easily be knocked over by a wagging tail and either burn your dog or start a fire.

Keep these tips in mind and you and your dog will have a safe and happy Halloween.