

Winter Newsletter

After the temperatures of the last few days, winter is definitely upon us. As dog owners many of us dread the dark mornings and evenings as well as the damp or chilly weather. But how does winter affect our canine friends?

Many younger dogs will continue to enjoy their walks but for some thin coated breeds elderly dogs or those recovering from injury, the colder weather can present particular problems. As owners, there are lots of things we can do to ease our pet through the winter months and keep that tail wagging.

So here are my top tips to help you and your dog enjoy the winter weather!

1. Always warm up your dog with a 5 minute walk and trot on the lead.

Warming up helps to prevent injury and prepare your dog for more active, off lead work. Muscle and joint flexibility really benefit from the increased temperature brought about by boosting the circulation.

2. Consider investing in a coat for your dog.

Yes really! Older dogs, particularly those with arthritic joints or spinal pain benefit from being kept warm. Some thin coated breeds such as whippets and greyhounds are less equipped to deal with very cold weather.

3. Watch your step!

Muddy fields, pavements covered in leaves and puddles may seem like a ready-made playground for your dog but a slippery surface makes applying the brakes difficult! Repeated, sudden stops from a sprint on a low traction surface are a common cause of injury to the shoulder area. Try rolling rather than throwing the ball or scattering small treats in a trail to add interest to winter walks without the risk of injury.

4. Give your older dog exercise snacks

Two shorter walks rather than one long one are better for dogs with arthritis or those recovering from illness or injury. This is known as exercise snacking! If your dog has recently had an operation, contact your vet for specific advice regarding exercise.

Best wishes,
Jill and Bella

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