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Let's Celebrate July!

Welcome July! With this month, we're almost midway through the year and it's also known for being one of the hottest month!

July is named after Roman dictator Julius Caesar (100 B.C.– 44 B.C.) who was born on July 12th. Caesar developed the precursor to the Gregorian calendar we use today. Interestingly, July also seems to be the month dedicated to freedom, independence, and celebrations of country and culture. Enjoy learning a little history—and raise a toast to freedom!

July Flowers and Birthstone

July's birth flowers are the larkspur and water lily. The larkspur, especially white forms, generally indicates lightheartedness; pink, fickleness; purple, first love, and the water lily symbolizes purity of heart.

The July birthstone is the ruby, which is believed to protect its wearer from evil.

- “Ruby” is derived from the Latin rubeus, which means “red.”
- This gem is a red form of corundum; all other colors are sapphires. The ruby’s color is due to the presence of chromium, which also makes the gem subject to cracks.
- The ruby, along with the related sapphire, are the second hardest natural gemstones, with only the diamond being harder.
- The gem was once thought to protect warriors if worn on their armor or embedded in their skin.
- Considered the king of gems, the ruby symbolizes love, passion, energy, and success.

As if summer weather and vacations weren't good enough reasons to love July, there are many ways to have fun each and every day. From Independence Day, Chocolate Day, World Emoji Day, and much, much more, you can get out and party this month. So...enjoy your July!

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Fun in the Sun: Eight Awesome Games to Play with Your Dog This Summer

When the sun is shining and the weather is warm, most of us want to get outside and enjoy some R&R. Our pets are also more than happy to tag along and have fun with some outdoor recreation. Yet how do you keep your pet occupied and active during the summer months, without getting bored with the same-old, same-old? You need to try some amazing games!

Along with daily walks, playing games with your pet can help keep them active, in good shape, and mentally challenged. Summertime gives us more

opportunity to do things under the sun while enjoying fresh air with our favorite four-legged friends. Here are some top choices for energetic games.

1. **Tug of War** – Yes, this is one of the most traditional of games to play with your dog, and most dogs love it. The reason being, vying for a thing of interest is ingrained in your pup, and this back and forth tugging is seen in the wild as a way to get food. Use a sturdy rope toy or synthetic items, or even a rugged stuffed toy, and get to tugging! Just be sure to get rid of the toys when they start to fray, to avoid the risk of your pet ingesting string.
2. **Agility Course** – Build your own agility course using things around the home, like balls, chairs, poles, boxes, tubes, kiddie pools, and so on for your dog to jump over, through, and around. You can also buy a course online, but the DIYer in you may want to try your hand and make your dog's fancy new course yourself!
3. **Scavenger Hunt** – Dogs who love to smell out clues, will love this go-seek game. Teach them to sleuth out interesting toys, treats, and small pieces of kibble. This is great fun for them and can help minimize how much they eat and how quickly, especially if you disperse their regular meals in smaller portions.
4. **Water Games** – Staying cool during the summer months is imperative. You can do this by combining outdoor fun with water. Fill a kiddie pool with clean water and allow your pet to splash around. If you have a pool, you can teach them to swim by starting slow in the shallow end. Many dogs also love to try and “catch” the spray from a hose, too. Cool, cheap, and fun!
5. **Retrieval Games** – Fetch is a universally loved game for most canines. Whether you choose a Frisbee, ball, or some other toy, your pet will get lots of exercise. On hot days, just do a short session, perhaps a few times a day, rather than giving them too much time under the sun in rigorous exercise.
6. **Trick Training** – If your pet has mastered basic commands, try your hand at teaching them more complex commands and tricks. Roll over, bed, and play dead, can be challenging for your pet and for you as well.
7. **Doggie Playdate** – Invite your friends and neighbors' well behaved canines over for some backyard play. This is a great option for socialization time and will give your pet the opportunity to play with peers in a safe and supervised way.
8. **Doga and Aerobics** – If you are a yoga kinda guy or gal, teaching your pet yoga, or doga as it is called, is a great idea for patio fun. There are also several aerobic classes you can consider that include dogs, such as dog dancing (yes, it's a thing).

Dear Tabby



What are cats whiskers used for?

They are very sensitive sense organs that tell a cat a lot about their position in space and what is going on around them. They appear to be particularly useful in low light and darkness, times when other organs cannot collect as much information. You can tell if a cat is nervous or scared if the whiskers are pointing forward at a potential threat. And whatever you do, don't trim or pluck whiskers because they serve as an important information source for cats.

What Tibetan dog was introduced to America as a gift from Thubten Gyatso, 13th Dalai Lama?

Lhasa Apso, One of the oldest dog breeds, the Lhasa Apso was bred by Tibetan monks as a watchdog in Buddhist monasteries.



Why Cats Make Wonderful Companions and Pets

While dogs are known to be a "man's best friend", cats aren't far off. They are one of the most popular pets in the world, and they often provide advantages that you may not get with other pets. Below are a few reasons why these adorable animals make great pets and companions:

Not Demanding - Aside from food and a nice place to sleep in, cats don't ask for much. They are perfect for people who have a busy schedule - such as long hours at work. Staying home alone does not bother a cat, they'll be too busy sleeping or just relaxing.

They'll Help Keep your Home Pest-free - Cats are natural predators. Even though they are mainly domesticated pets, they still have a hunter instinct, so they do tend to keep rodents away from your home.

They are Relatively Low Maintenance - While dogs need to be walked daily, groomed monthly, and need dedicated playtime, cats mainly take care of themselves. They groom themselves (cats with long hair will require extra grooming), are easier to potty train, and like to play on their own for the most part.

Warm and Cuddly - While cats like to be independent, they also love to cuddle up and snuggle next to you or sleep right by you. Plus, their soft fur is an added cuddle bonus.

They are Ideal for Apartments - Cats don't need a lot of space to run around, unlike certain dog breeds. A lot of apartments also tend to allow cats, as they are quiet, so they are less likely to bother neighbors.

And Lest We Forget, They are Super Cute - Not much to say here, they are just very adorable.



July Pet Holidays

Month-Long Celebrations

- National Lost Pet Prevention Month
- National Pet Hydration Awareness Month
- Dog House Repair Month

Week-Long Celebrations

- July 27–August 3: National Feed a Rescue Pet Week

Day Celebrations

- July 9: Cow Appreciation Day
- July 11: All-American Pet Photo Day
- July 16: World Snake Day
- July 31: Mutt's Day
- July 15: National Pet Fire Safety Day
- July 21: No Pet Store Puppies Day
- July 26: National Dog Photography Day

**Keeping Your Dog Safe
When the Fireworks Start**



Some dogs have no problem with the sight and sound of fireworks if they've been desensitized — hunting dogs, for example, grow used to the sounds and smells of hunting rifles and gun powder. Most dogs, however, are not used to these things, so the Fourth of July can be a particularly stressful holiday for dogs and their humans alike.

More pets run away on the Fourth of July than any other day, so you should take extra steps to ensure their safety. Keep a keen eye on your dog during the commotion, and make sure your pet is wearing proper identification.

It is natural for dogs to be afraid of loud noises. The sounds trigger their nervous systems, and they can become anxious or afraid. Running away from the noise is a survival instinct.

Remember, to your dog, the experience of fireworks is different than other natural loud noises, like thunder. Fireworks are closer to the ground, more vibrant, and are accompanied by sudden booms, flashes, and burning smells. Dogs experience the world through their senses — nose, eyes, ears. The typical Fourth of July celebration can be overwhelming to them.

With that in mind, here are some tips to help keep your dog calm, making for an easier holiday for both of you.

Preparation

Arrange to have your dog in a place where there won't be loud fireworks displays — a friend's or relative's home or a doggie day care with which your dog is familiar. If it's an unfamiliar place for your dog, take them over there a few times in the days before the holiday so that it won't be a surprise when you take them there on the Fourth.

Accommodation

If you cannot take your dog to a place away from fireworks, then have a travel kennel at home for them to feel safe in. If you're not going to be home, have a friend or sitter there to keep your dog company.

Acclimation

The best way to prepare your dog for fireworks is to make sure they're comfortable with the sound in advance.

While this is a simple process, it can take time — possibly three or four months of playing the recorded sound of fireworks for your dog at an increasingly louder volume before he eats, before a walk, and before affection and play.

This will condition them by association to hear the sound and interpret it as something good. While you can try this method over only a week or two, in such a short time span it should only be used in conjunction with one or more of the other tips. In any case, play the firework sounds.

Thundershirts

If you do find it necessary to use a thundershirt to calm your dog during the fireworks, remember that you must introduce any such tool at the right time,

conditioning your dog to understand that the thundershirt is there to bring them to a calm state.

Communication

If you are going to be with your dog during the fireworks, sending the calming message that they have nothing to worry about will also help them relax.

Remember, though, while humans communicate with words, dogs communicate with energy, and will look to their pack leader for clues on how they should behave. If you're not making a big deal or showing excitement about the fireworks, then they will learn to be less concerned as well.

In all cases above, expend your dog's excess energy first, before the fireworks start, by taking them on a very long walk to tire them out and put them in a calm state.

Most importantly, don't think of this in terms of your dog as your child who is missing out on a great, fun time. That's human guilt. Your dog won't know what they're missing. You're being a good pack leader by not exposing them to a situation that will trigger their flight instinct in a negative way. When the booms and bangs of Independence Day are over, your dog will be grateful to you for having made it a less stressful experience!

New HSOTC Shelter Hours of Operation



As our county begins to reopen, we have started in-person visits with our new shelter hours of operation indicated below.

In addition, we are still requiring that all visitors wear masks when arriving for your safety, that of our staff and our animals...and if you do not have a mask, we will provide you with one.

Sunday – **Closed**

Monday – **Closed**

Tuesday – Thursday - **9:30AM – 1:30PM**

(Note Times for Animal Visiting Hours Below)

Friday – Saturday – **Open by Appointment Only**

(Call 209-984-5489 to schedule an appointment)

Animal Visiting Hours

Tuesday – Thursday - **10:30AM – 12:30PM**

**Thank you for your understanding
and please continue to stay safe!**

You can help us
continue to save one
more animal at a time.

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