



Summer Survival Guide: Living Outdoors with Pets in Colorado

Colorado summers can be intense and dangerous. High temperatures, strong sun, and limited access to resources can quickly lead to dehydration and heat-related illness for both you and your dog. This guide is designed to help keep both of you safe.

1. Hydration for You and Your Dog

Water is your most important resource. Try to carry more than you think you'll need. Drink regularly, even if you don't feel thirsty. Offer your dog water often—dogs can overheat faster than humans. If needed, use filters or purification methods when accessing natural water sources.

2. Avoid Peak Heat

Stay in shaded areas between 10 AM and 4 PM when the sun is strongest. Plan movement early in the morning or later in the evening to reduce heat exposure for both of you.

3. Create Shade and Ventilation

Use tarps, tents, or natural cover like trees to create shade. Make sure air can move through your space—trapped heat can build quickly and become dangerous. Never stay in enclosed areas without airflow.

4. Recognize Heat Illness

For you: dizziness, headache, nausea, confusion, or heavy sweating are warning signs. For your dog: excessive panting, drooling, vomiting, weakness, or collapse. Move to shade immediately, cool down gradually, and seek help if symptoms worsen.

5. Cooling Strategies

Wet cloths, bandanas, or clothing can help cool your body. For your dog, focus on cooling paws, belly, and chest with water. Avoid using ice directly—it can shock the system. Gradual cooling is safest.

6. Ground and Paw Safety

Hot pavement can burn paws and also radiates heat back onto your body. Stick to shaded areas, dirt, or grass when possible. If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to walk on.

7. Food and Nutrition

Heat can reduce appetite for both people and dogs. Try to eat smaller amounts more often during cooler times of the day. Keep food sealed to prevent spoilage and pests.

8. Stay Connected and Identified

Keep identification on your dog at all times. If possible, carry important information for yourself as well. Being identifiable can make a huge difference in emergencies.

Quick Survival Tips:

- Carry extra water whenever possible
- Rest often in shade
- Move during cooler hours
- Check your dog frequently
- Know the signs of heat illness
- Use wet cloths or water to cool down safely

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