

**Winterizing Your Pet's Behavior**  
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With the arrival of inclement weather, most pets are probably spending more time inside. You may be less willing to take your dog for a walk than you were in the summer, and your dog is less likely to enjoy being in the backyard chasing balls or frisbees. Your cat, who in warm weather might have been content for hours to lay in the grass or chase butterflies in the backyard, is now inside more often with nothing to do. More time inside usually means less opportunities for physical activity and exercise. Pets still have energy they need to spend, and they may find inappropriate ways to do so. They may become destructive, scratching or chewing on household items. Dogs may bark or cats may jump on counters or knock items off of shelves and other surfaces to get your attention. Bored pets can be very annoying.

You may need to find some indoor activities for your pet so she can burn off that excess energy in acceptable ways. Provide more chewies and toys for your dog. Booda Bones, made of pressed cornstarch or Nyla-Bones are easy on a dog's digestive tract but still fun to chew. A Buster Cube, Goodie Ship or Ball filled with treats can keep a dog occupied for awhile. A game of indoor fetch is another good idea. Our young Dalmatian Ashley has so much energy that we throw her ball down the stairs rather than just across the room –she loves bounding up and down the stairs in about 2 leaps.

Buy a new feather for your cat's Cat Dancer and spend some time dangling and dragging it across the floor for your cat to chase. Consider purchasing a few new and novel toys such as Catnip Blowing Bubbles. Cats love to chase the catnip scented bubbles you blow! Freshen the catnip in your cat's other catnip toys. Buy a package of indoor greens to grow for your cat to munch instead of grass or your houseplants.

The change in the weather may also change your pet's elimination habits. Make sure you clear the snow out of an area for your dog to eliminate. Your dog may also need some added encouragement to brave the elements, so you may need to go out with her. If your cat is accustomed to eliminating in soil outside, you may need to add a thin layer of potting soil to your indoor litterboxes if your cat is having problems making the adjustment to litter.

If you think about how winter weather may influence your pet's behavior, you should be able to prevent many problems that would otherwise arise.