



The Plant Professionals

“Pet Friendly” Gardening

We love pets, and they love us. They give us love, make us laugh, and fill us with joy. In return, we give them attention, exercise, food, water, and shelter. Most pets enjoy the outdoors, but when it's not safe, our landscape becomes their playground war zone.

Property:

- When walking pets, pick up after them. It shows you care about others and your pets.
- Destructive dogs = bored dogs. They are playful and fun loving animals. To make your relationship work, you must provide elements to keep them content. Create areas for them to enjoy and exercise. Grass or green areas are great. They run and roll in it. They eat it, and lay in it. Bermuda or St. Augustine are both good for dogs and cats.
- Puppies and kittens are challenging. Don't encourage destructive behavior just because they are cute. They're like children, a great joy but must be taught acceptable limits that are safe and reasonable. Use obedience classes or read about how you achieve having a behaved pet.
- Spend time with your pets. Take them for walks good for everyone. An hour or more is usually enough to keep most pets happy. Get them their own toys. Something that is ok to tear up.
- Give them protection from the elements. A dog that's hot in summer will dig anywhere it can to get cool. Same is true for cold or rainy times. Provide them with shade and plenty of water for summer and dry protection from rain and cold.
- For problems with unwanted pets, use repellants like garlic or pepper spray. Repel is another product you sprinkle down to keep pets out of flower beds.

Safety:

- Never leave a choke collar on a dog. If they get tangled up, they can and will kill themselves trying to get out.
- Old dogs, puppies, and pools don't mix. They can easily fall in and not find a way out. Dogs can learn to swim, and most love water, but with supervision.
- Watch where you plant plants with thorns, needles, or barbs. In a rush they can find themselves scratched or eyes can be injured.
- Put your pets up when mowing or weedeating. Pets can become scared, or may even attach the equipment causing injury to you and them.
- Keep your felines fenced with a cat compound or a cat fence. These are simple additions to a patio or backyard. If your cat is declawed, this is especially important because they have no defense.

Poisonous Stuff:

- If it is ok for us, it must be ok for our pets... WRONG. Chocolate and onions are toxic to pets. Small grapes and small food can cause choking.
- When using chemicals, even organics, always follow the label. Most products require water to activate them. They must be completely dry before allowing your pets in the areas treated. This applies to ALL chemicals, fertilizers, weed controls, and any pesticides.
- Cats are poisoned commonly by walking through a substance, then cleaning their paws.
- Pyrethrum, a common organic insecticide, is highly toxic to cats, but not to dogs.
- Weed and feed fertilizers have been shown to cause cancer in animals exposed for long periods of time.
- Pond and fish owners must be even more careful with products they use, as fish are highly susceptible to many products.
- Bird owners and those with exotic pets must be extremely careful.

Poisonous Plants:

Most plants won't kill animals and the good thing is most poisonous plants taste bad or bitter. They're only trying to protect themselves. So, when an animal eats it, they usually get sick, which means a trip to the vet. There are a few we should be aware of though. Oleander is the most common. All parts of the plant are toxic, but especially the leaves. Even the dried ones are still toxic. These should be raked up and discarded, particularly if you have young pets.

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| • Datura or Angel Trumpet | • Casto Bean |
| • Sago Palm seeds and roots | • Cyclamen |
| • Lilies | • Kalanchoe |
| • Tulips and Narcissus | • Desert Rose |
| • Azaleas | • Chrysanthemums |

A full list of toxic plants is available at: ASPCA.ORG

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