

Celebrations that involve fireworks can be very stressful for our pets, since they experience the world differently than we do. For an animal, fireworks are unexpected and unpredictable, and the noise and physical sensations fireworks create can cause a lot of stress.



Here are some helpful tips and strategies to help make fireworks less scary and keep your pets safe.

Before the Event

-  **Seek Veterinary Advice:** If you have concerns, speak with your vet before the event. Your vet may be able to prescribe medication or treatments to help your pet feel more comfortable during the fireworks. Contacting your vet ahead of time will give you time to try the medication and make sure it's right for your pet.

Pheromone devices like [Adaptil](#) and [Feliway](#) plug ins or collars may be useful for calming some pets.

-  **Practice:** If there is a holiday where fireworks are typically set off, help your pet learn to associate loud noises with good things. Practise by carrying treats with you and any time your pet hears a loud noise, like something being dropped on the ground, or a loud car passing by, give your pet plenty of treats. Desensitizing your pet in a positive way, can help them better cope.
-  **Set Up Your Space:** Make your home extra comfortable for your pet by creating extra hiding spaces, closing the blinds, and reducing the impact of noise reverberation by hanging blankets or providing rugs, provided they won't make the space too hot. If your pet likes to burrow in a certain place, like the basement, bathtub, or closet then set up a comfortable area there for them to find comfort and safety.

We do not recommend using essential oils as aromatherapy as many are toxic to pets.

During the Event

-  **Prevent Lost Pets:** Don't let your pets outdoors while fireworks are going off, and leave them at home when you go out to celebrate. Secure your house and yard by making sure any potential escape points like an easily opened door or open window are shut properly ahead of time. Ensure your pet has their ID on and your contact information is up to date on their ID, in case they do escape.



Enrichment: Give your pet something to do during the fireworks. This could be a frozen treat, an extra fun puzzle toy, a digging box or something to destroy, scratch or shred. If your pet prefers to interact with you, playing fetch or with a favourite toy like a flirt pole can also do the trick to distract them.

Masking Noise: You can run a fan, play white noise or music with low frequencies to partially mask the firework noise. Moving your pet to the basement or an internal room can also help decrease the intensity of sound. Remember that their hearing is even more sensitive than ours.



Support and comfort your pet if it helps them. Comfort and support don't "encourage" your pet to act fearful – rather, they help them feel safe. Similarly, do not punish your pet or use tools like electronic or citronella collars to make them stop showing signs of fear or stress, such as whining, pacing, or being unsettled. This will likely cause them to further associate fireworks with stress.

Each pet is different when it comes to how they respond to fireworks. Some pets require strategies like practising ahead of time, setting up a comfortable space or distractions during the event. Others may try to escape, making it vitally important that they are in a secure environment and wearing current ID.

Also, always remember that your veterinarian is a great resource if you have questions or concerns about your pet.

Additional Resources:

For more information on supports for pets, visit our website:

<https://www.edmontonhumanesociety.com/what-we-do/education-training/behaviour-resources/>

Did You Know?

You can also ask us behavioural questions by emailing:

askthespecialist@edmontonhumanesociety.com

It takes approximately \$7 million to keep the Edmonton Humane Society operational for one year and 40% of these funds come from generous donations made by supporters like you. Please [Donate](#).