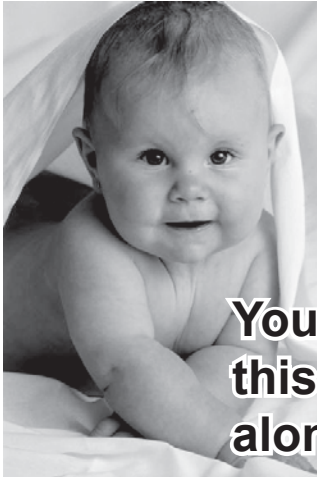


The DANGERS of Leaving a Pet in a Car



**You wouldn't leave
this baby locked
alone in a car...**



**...so why would you
leave these babies?**

In our fast paced society, saving even a second may sound appealing. Have you ever left a pet alone in a car for “just a second” or a few minutes while you ran in to drop off a video, pick up a gallon of milk from the store, or run a quick errand? Unfortunately, many people have done it. Some people even leave their pets in the car while they do their grocery shopping, work out at the gym, or visit with friends. This is **NOT ACCEPTABLE** behavior! You should **NEVER** leave your pet alone whether it's just for a one second or for an hour.

Your pet can't tell you not to leave. They can't tell you they are lonely and miss you while you are gone. They can't tell you if they are hot or cold and the truth is they shouldn't have to! If you are a pet owner then it is **YOUR** responsibility to take care of your pet, which means that you need to do what is in their best interest, not your own! No one ever said that being a pet owner would be easy. It requires making sacrifices and putting your pet before yourself, just like parents of children.

Remember — it only takes a second for tragedy to occur. Have you ever thought about how long it will take in an emergency vet hospital; posting flyers in your neighborhood and visiting shelters looking for your lost pet; or recovering from the death of your pet. Don't take the risk! Leave your pet at home where they are more comfortable and above all — **SAFE!**

Never Leave a Pet in a Car Without Appropriate Supervision



What can happen in seconds:

Hyperthermia — Imagine that you are trapped inside a parked car.

The windows are only open a crack. Your normal body temperature is already 101.5 degrees (dogs) and the temperature is rising. Now imagine that you are wearing a fur coat. On a warm day, even when parked in the shade with the windows cracked, the temperature inside a car can reach 120 degrees resulting in brain damage and death from heatstroke. Also, you should never transport a dog in a pick-up truck bed — especially on a warm day. Besides being extremely dangerous (many dogs jump or fall out if unrestrained (which is illegal) or they can hang themselves if tethered), the hot metal can burn a dog's feet.

Hypothermia — Exposure to cold temperatures can lead to hypothermia. Small, short-coated animals are especially susceptible. It is much better to leave a pet at home than to leave him in a car.

Distractions — You can become distracted and forget your pet is in the car, which can result in heat stroke, suffocation, hyperthermia/hypothermia and death. Yes it has happened! Make sure you keep a reminder of your pet's presence up front with you (i.e. leash, pet food, etc.)

Pet/Car theft — Thousands of pets are stolen each year from unattended cars (sometimes both the pet and the car are taken). Unfortunately, there are people out there that may try to steal your precious pet so they can sell it or do cruel things to it. If your pet is kept in the back of an open pick-up truck it makes it all the easier. It may seem like fun to take your pet for a ride, but many pets prefer to spend time with you in the comfort and safety of your home. If you must take your pet with you in your car, do so safely — cats should ride in a pet carrier and dogs should ride in travel crates or dog seat belts.

Fire — A car can ignite into flames resulting in the loss of your pet.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning — Pets can die from carbon monoxide poisoning if left in a running car (especially in an enclosed area, such as a garage). Carbon monoxide poisoning, which reduces the oxygen supply to your pet's brain, can happen in a matter of minutes!

Injury — The car can be shifted into gear by an unrestrained pet, which can lead to your pet being injured as well as innocent bystanders. Your pet can also be injured from power windows/sunroofs that they accidentally set off and get stuck in. Even if they do manage to escape they may end up stolen, lost, or run over by other vehicles.

Strangulation — An upset pet may try to escape the car and in attempting to do so hang themselves in the seat belt.

Separation Anxiety — Some animals suffer extreme anxiety when separated from their owners. They can work themselves into a frenzy and wind up severely injuring themselves. They may try to break windows, claw at metal (leading to bloody paws and expensive vet bills), etc. in order to escape. They may also defecate in the car or destroy the interior because of their anxiety over being left alone.

**PLEASE REMEMBER A CAR IS NOT A PET SITTER AND THAT THE
BEST WAY TO SHOW YOUR PET YOU LOVE THEM IS TO LEAVE
THEM AT HOME WHERE THEY WILL BE SAFE!**

San Bernardino County
Animal Care & Control Program
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