

Pets & fireworks

Keep animals calm, contained and safe when the sky lights up.

WHY IT MATTERS

Fireworks can frighten animals into flight. A little planning before the first bang can prevent escapes, injuries and heartbreak.

There are several celebrations across Australia that may include fireworks. While most of us enjoy these celebrations and the fireworks, many animals are terrified by fireworks, causing them to take flight and try to escape the loud noises.

Different animals show stress in different ways. Use the guidance below to prepare a safe, familiar space.

Species Specific Care:



A calm corner

Dark • quiet • familiar
Keep food, water and bedding close by.

Cats:

- ◆ Provide hiding places in your home
- ◆ Cats can become more stressed if they're outside during fireworks
- ◆ Don't try and tempt your cat out as this will cause them to become more stressed
- ◆ Make sure your cat is always kept in a safe and secure environment and can't escape if there's a sudden noise.
- ◆ Have your pets microchipped in case they do escape – by law, your cat should be microchipped and registered with Council

Dogs:

- ◆ Walk them during daylight hours before fireworks
- ◆ Close windows and curtains to muffle the sounds
- ◆ Put on music or the tv to mask the sounds. Ignore the firework noises yourself.
- ◆ Create a quiet space (play area) where your dog can feel in control and some hiding places around your home
- ◆ Each evening before the fireworks begin, move your dog to the



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play area and provide toys and other things that they enjoy. Make sure that there are things for you to do too so that your dog isn't left alone.

- ◆ Make sure your dog is always kept in a safe and secure environment and can't escape if there's a sudden noise.
- ◆ Have your pets microchipped in case they do escape – by law, your dog should already be microchipped.

Horses:

- ◆ Check locally to see if there are going to be firework displays in your area.
- ◆ Where possible – tell the organisers of firework displays that horses are nearby and ask them to set off their fireworks in the opposite direction.
- ◆ Keep to your horse's normal routine as much as possible.
- ◆ Check for anything they could hurt themselves on if panicked, making sure fences and gates are all secure.
- ◆ Stay with your horse if possible—but remember your own safety—a panicked horse can be dangerous.
- ◆ After the event keep an eye on your horse for stress related issues or injuries.

Small animals:

- ◆ Bring your small pets indoors if possible.
- ◆ If you cannot bring pets indoors then cover enclosures with blankets or towels so that your pet has a dark safe place to hide away from loud noises and flashing lights.
- ◆ Please consider your pets comfort on our New Years Celebrations

REMEMBER

Animals can jump over, dig under or climb out of barriers they would normally stay inside. Check the whole environment — not just the front gate.

Native wildlife:

Wildlife are also affected by the noises and bright lights of fireworks. Wild birds, bats and flying foxes will take flight due to fear and panic, and may sustain injuries as a result of colliding with tree branches, fences, and even buildings.

Larger animals like kangaroos, wallabies and wombats will try to outrun the noise, and end up on roads, and places they shouldn't be, which may result in them being injured or killed.

Contact your local wildlife carer organisation if you have any concerns about risks to local wildlife.

FIREWORKS SAFETY CHECKLIST

Use this quick check before the first bang.

BEFORE FIREWORKS

- Check local announcements and plan for the likely timing.
- Walk dogs and complete horse routines in daylight.
- Bring small pets indoors where possible.
- Secure gates, fences, doors, windows and enclosures.

CREATE A CALM ENVIRONMENT

- Set up familiar bedding, hiding places and favourite toys.
- Close windows and curtains to reduce sound and flashes.
- Use music or the TV as background sound.
- Keep your own behaviour calm and reassuring.

DURING FIREWORKS

- Keep pets safely contained and do not leave dogs alone if you can avoid it.
- Do not force a hiding cat or frightened animal to come out.
- Stay with horses only if it is safe to do so.
- Watch for signs of distress, escape or injury.

AFTER THE EVENT

- Check animals and enclosures for injury or damage.
- Keep dogs and cats secured until the area is quiet.
- Contact a wildlife carer organisation about injured or displaced wildlife.
- Update identification details if anything has changed.

IMPORTANT

Ensure animals can be easily identified if they escape. Cats and dogs should wear a collar, be microchipped and have their registration and contact details kept up to date.

A little preparation can prevent a frightened escape

Fireworks can cause animals to panic, run away and injure themselves. Plan ahead for nights when fireworks are expected.

JOIN ANIMAL CARE AUSTRALIA

Animal Care Australia invites you, your club or group to join us.

ACA has quickly established itself as a reputable experience-based animal welfare organisation.

ACA is comprised of volunteers who devote many hours of their time responding to local, state and national animal welfare issues. Your input into this process is crucial.

Join ACA and help us continue to advocate for all of our animals.

ACA offers memberships for small and large animal organisations, as well as individual Supporters and businesses.

Join online or download the membership application: Join online or download the membership application:

animalcareaustralia.org.au/join/

