

# 10 Tips For Keeping Your Dog Cool

by Jerry Thoms / August 10th, 2011 [6](#)

**1.** Always carry plenty of dog water in your vehicle and in your hunting vest, no matter what the apparent temperature. Haul water in one-gallon jugs and five-gallon cans for on the road and in a smaller, portable container for in the field. Also carry several pounds of ice in a chest-type cooler for emergency canine cool down.



**Water on the outside of a dog is a key factor in avoiding heat stress because a wet canine is usually a cool canine. Thoroughly soak the fur and rub water into and through the coat to ensure skin contact. For dogs on the edge of heat stress, pour water on its tongue (especially if the dog won't or can't drink), ears, throat, belly, groin, and back.**

- 2.** Never assume that natural supplies of water (cattle dugouts, ponds, or creeks) will be in the field (in hot weather these sources can dry up) or that the water found in these places is good (in dry spells, toxic farm chemicals can concentrate there or poisonous algae can grow there).
- 3.** Get water into and onto a gun dog at every opportunity. Wet down all dogs before, during, and after an exercise or training session. And of course, follow this same procedure on a hunt.
- 4.** When the breeze seems cool on your face, assume that on the ground where your dog is the temperature may be much hotter with little air circulation. So, keep your hot gun dog well hydrated on the inside and outside all day.
- 5.** When the weather is hot, hunt, exercise, and train your gun dog early or late in the day to avoid high temperatures. Usually the hunting is better then anyhow and your dog will always perform better in cooler conditions.
- 6.** Recognize the signs of canine heat stress, such as excessive panting, glazed eyes, ignoring commands, staggering, and falling down without an ability to get up.

- 7.** Treat all heat stress as a serious condition that can disable and may kill any dog no matter what breed, general health, or age. Assume that a heat stressed dog may need medical attention which includes an immediate trip to a veterinarian for an examination and treatment.
- 8.** A heat stressed dog needs to be immediately cooled off with water in its mouth (don't force a dog to drink if it doesn't want to or can't), on its ears, neck, belly, back and groin area. Squeeze water into the hair and down to the skin to assure that cooling contact occurs.
- 9.** When transporting a heat stressed dog in a crate or a dog trailer, make sure plenty of ventilation is available to keep the canine container from turning into a deadly sauna. Best of all, put a hot dog in the vehicle in front of the air conditioner.
- 10.** Put ice cubes in your dog's crate as an insurance policy that cool water will always be available when traveling down the road or sitting still on a hot day. Consider the use of commercially-made products specially designed to replenish lost liquid, minerals, and vitamins—sort of like Gatorade for dogs