

Sit and Stay

BABY, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE

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In spite of warmer weather recently, there's a good chance it will still be a long, cold winter. For the skiers this is great news! For some of us, including our pets this is not exactly the type of weather we enjoy.

Some people are under the impression that because a dog has a fur coat it can tolerate the cold. This is not true, especially for breeds with short coats. Some examples of dogs that should not be exposed to the cold without a dog sweater or coat are the Boxer, Chihuahua, Chinese Crested and the Miniature Pinscher.

All breeds regardless of the length of their coat can suffer from frostbite. The most susceptible parts of their bodies are their ears and feet. Frostbite is extremely painful and they can experience the same devastating consequences as we can. For those of you that love winter and would like to include your dog on your outdoor activities there are some precautions you can take.

Make sure their feet are protected. There are dog boots which I would recommend if your dog will wear them. Allow your dog to adjust to the boots indoors before you take them outdoors. It can be quite amusing to watch them adjust!

Another alternative is paw wax which can be found at the majority of dog stores. The paw wax protects their pads from the salt and the cold. Some products you have on hand can also be used-Vaseline, cooking oil

or cooking spray.

Dogs are social creatures. Do not leave them outside all the time. One of my students had a lab which they left outside all the time — the dog was not allowed in the house at all. This dog developed an issue of barking.

My student wanted to put a muzzle on the dog that was her solution. The reason the dog was barking was because it wanted to be with her.

Imagine if you were isolated from the people you love and if you were lucky once in awhile someone would come outside and pay attention to you. How would you feel? Wouldn't you say something? Or would you just sit quietly?

As you can see a muzzle isn't going to correct the problem. Plus a muzzle can kill your dog in as quickly as 20 minutes. Your dog is unable to pant wearing a muzzle. My recommendation would be to bring your dog inside.

Stay warm this winter and don't forget to protect your pets from the elements.

For training questions, please contact Darlene Koza at Scooter's School of Sit & Stay. 585-755-7647 or www.sitandstay.org