

Fireworks ready checklist:

on-the-night advice from PDSA's vet experts



Cats and dogs

- Make sure your pet's microchip details are up to date in the database, in case they do run away or manage to escape.
- Take your dog for a walk well before fireworks displays are due to begin
- A high carbohydrate meal an hour before you expect fireworks can help dogs feel sleepy
- Make sure your pet den is accessible and your pet is rewarded when they spend time there
- Make sure all doors, windows and cat and dog flaps are closed and locked, and curtains are closed
- Have some playlists ready – music with a repetitive beat can help mask the sounds
- Stay calm yourself. Keep your tone, mood and behaviour as normal as possible. If you get very anxious, or comfort your pet more than usual, this can make your pet more unsettled
- If your pet prefers to go away and hide, let them. Leave them alone and don't try to coax them out or comfort them – this is their way of coping
- Don't pick up cats or restrain them if they are scared: cats prefer to control how they cope
- If your pet is used to seeking reassurance from you in stressful times, comfort them as you would normally. This is a short-term solution to help your pet cope while they're afraid. In the long term, it's important to help your pet overcome their fears – ask your vet about accredited pet behaviourists in your area, so your pet can cope when they're alone too
- Never punish your pets. It's not their fault they're scared and it adds to their anxiety

Small pets

- Move rabbit & guinea pig hutches into a car-free garage or shed on nights with fireworks displays.
- If you don't have a garage or shed, try and move hutches indoors for the night, but keep them away from noisy areas and TVs etc.
- Partly cover hutches with thick blankets, so they're more sound-proofed.
- Move smaller pets' cages away from any windows or doors, and partly cover with blankets.
- Give extra bedding – this helps keep noise out and provides a hiding place.
- Make sure your pets have plenty of hiding places and secure areas in their cages where they can feel safe.
- Make sure all doors, windows and cat flaps are closed and locked, and curtains are closed.
- Have some playlists ready if they find this calming – music with a repetitive beat can help mask the sounds.
- Ensure any bonfires and fireworks are well away from pets.

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pdsa.org.uk/fireworksready

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