



## Fireworks

As Bonfire Night or New Year approaches, people will be busy buying sparklers and fireworks but may forget about the traumatic effects the noisy evening can have on dogs and other pets.

### Do:

- Acclimatise your dog to noises prior to the big night. There are many noise CDs on the market which give you the opportunity to introduce your dog to a variety of potentially disturbing noises in a controlled manner.
- Make a safe den for your dog to retreat to if he or she feels scared. Alternatively, let your dog take refuge under furniture and include an old, unwashed piece of clothing like a woolly jumper so that your dog can smell your scent and feel comfortable.
- Distract your dog from the noise by having the TV or the radio switched on.
- Try to act and behave as normal, as your dog will pick up on any odd behaviour. Remain calm, happy and cheerful as this will send positive signals to your dog. Reward calm behaviour with doggy treats or playing with toys of interest.
- Feed your dog a while before you expect any disturbances, as once the fireworks start your dog may be too anxious to eat.
- Walk your dog before dusk. It may be some time before it's safe to venture outside again for your dog to relieve himself.
- Make sure you shut all doors and windows in your home and don't forget to draw the curtains. This will block out any scary flashes of light and reduce the noise level of fireworks.
- If your dog comes to you for comfort, make sure that you give it to him/her.
- Keep a collar and ID tag on your dog, just in case they do accidentally escape.

### Don't:

- Take your dog to a firework display, even if your dog does not bark or whimper, don't assume he or she is happy. Excessive yawning and panting can indicate that your dog is stressed.
- Tie your dog up outside while fireworks are being let off.
- Assume your garden is escape proof. If your dog needs to go out keep him on a lead just in case.
- Leave your dog on his own or in a separate room from you.
- Try to force your dog to face his fears - he'll just become more frightened.
- Forget to top up the water bowl. Anxious dogs pant more and get thirsty.
- Change routines more than necessary, as this can be stressful for some dogs.
- Try and tempt him out if he does retreat, as this may cause more stress.
- Tell your dog off! This will only make your pet more distressed.