

Halloween and Hounds

By Jennifer Shryock

Halloween is "fright night" for humans not dogs. Screaming, running, spooky children in masks make many dogs uncomfortable, nervous and frightened.

Halloween costumes are fun and are meant to disguise our normal appearance. **Dogs do not understand this change in appearance and may become frightened. Costumes that change the way a person walks, stands, or their general appearance may cause a dog to react differently than usual even with those they know.**



Keep in mind that children on Halloween night are excited and doing their best to be scary. This is not a fair or safe situation to put even the best of dogs in. Even the normally terrific tolerant family dog can find this night hard to handle.

Along with costumes being frightening to a dog there are some that may become interesting too. Swords, tails and dangling things may be fun for an excited dog to chase and toddlers certainly won't appreciate that. [Click here](#) to see a photo of a costume with very enticing antennae.

Every child and every costume is a new opportunity for different reactions from the same dog.

I recommend setting up your dog with their own private Halloween bash in a safe quiet spot with a yummy treat of their own. Here are some tips to help make this safe haven most comfortable.

1. Stuff a food dispensing toy with yummy mush and freeze it until it is "Halloween" time.
2. Use a fan or radio for white noise. Something consistent is best.
3. Be sure the blinds are down or the dog is not watching kids coming and going by the window. This will only frustrate him and allow him to practice barking and carrying on at the window.

Chocolate is toxic to dogs. Put candy in a safe spot.

Sometimes dogs are stolen, poisoned or injured by Halloween pranks. Keep your dog safe and sound inside your home.

Be safe and aware and have fun!

For more information on kid and dog safety on Halloween, check out www.familypaws.com