



A Dog Trainer's Top Five Tips for a Safe Halloween Celebration with Pets

by Darris Cooper, CPDT-KA, FFCP (NAPS)—Spooky season is upon us, and if you were part of the one in five people who, according to the National Retail Federation, planned to dress up their pet last year, you're probably already thinking about how you and your pet will celebrate Halloween this year. To make sure the season is full of treats—and a few (good) tricks—follow these tips for a safe and fun Halloween with your pets:

- **Safety First:** Earlier sunsets mean pet parents should take a few additional precautions to keep their pets safe while out and about. Dogs should be secure and visible on evening walks with a well-fitting, durable harness, collar and lead with night safety features such as reflective fabric or LED lighting. Consider an LED accessory and GPS tracker for pets.

- **Don't Get Ghosted:** It's easier for pets to go missing as front doors are repeatedly opened and closed for trick-or-treaters and houseguests. Microchip your pets, ensure their collars have the proper identification and register them on Petco Love Lost, a free national lost and found database that uses patented image-recognition technology to help reunite lost pets with their families.

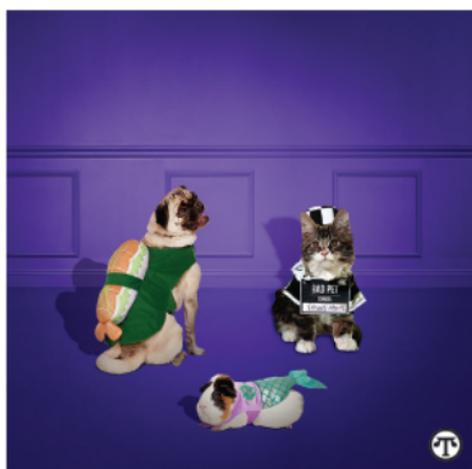
- **Tricks and Treats:** Shocking sights and ghoulish sounds outside of their normal routine may startle pets during trick-or-treating and Halloween parties. Many pets may benefit from a training refresh with the help of a Petco-certified dog trainer. A few practical tips:

- If your costume involves a mask or other disguises that may make you look or smell unfamiliar to your furry family member, slowly introduce each piece to your pet before the big day and pair this with a few training treats to help them adjust.

- Frequent knocks on the door and screams or cackles coming from Halloween decorations could be alarming for your pet. Create a quiet zone inside your home with a cozy bed, interactive toy, and calming aids such as a weighted jacket and calming chews to keep your pet comfortable during the festivities.

- While the rest of the town might be overindulging on candy, make sure your pet's treats are pet-friendly (not from the candy bag) and stay below 10% of their daily calories to help them stay happy and healthy.

- **Celebrate in Style:** Petco offers costumes for all types of pets, including cats, dogs, guinea pigs, rabbits and bearded dragons. New costumes such as the fish taco, sushi, UFO and mermaid



Proper preparation can help you and your pet family have a happier Halloween.

join classic favorites such as the banana, prisoner and skeleton for a wide assortment of fun disguises. For those looking for something more glamorous, the "Doggy Parton" collection features a stylish wig, feathered cowgirl hat and matching dress inspired by everyone's favorite country star. And if a costume isn't quite your pet's vibe, they can still get into the holiday spirit with Halloween-themed cozy PJs, treats, beds and blankets.

- **Find Spook-tastic Value:** Petco's Halloween Boutique features over 200 items under \$20 so pet parents can get in the spooky spirit minus the scary price tag with affordable items such as seasonal bandanas and headpiece costumes including the lobster, cow or box of popcorn. Pet parents can also find great value on everyday essentials such as nutrition and supplies, as well as services including veterinary care and grooming. Upcoming promotions include:

- 30% off freeze dried and frozen cat food, and select cat treats that are buy two, get one free on petco.com the last week of Happy Cat Month from Sept. 24 to 30.

- 50% off reptiles at Petco pet care centers and 50% off Zoo Med front-opening terrariums in-store and at petco.com during Petco's Reptile Rally from Oct. 21 to 22.

For more information, seasonal guides and expert-reviewed recommendations to help you and your pets safely celebrate Halloween, visit a Petco pet care center or petco.com/Halloween.

- *Darris Cooper is the National Dog Training Manager at Petco. He has worked in the industries of animal training and behavior, pet lifestyle and broadcast journalism, and has been a professional dog trainer for more than 10 years.*