



6 Ways to Dog-proof Your Christmas Tree

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Christmas is a wonderful time for you to deck the halls and spoil your favorite pup with presents. And although Christmas trees and their accessories can do wonders spreading holiday cheer, they can also be dangerous for dogs. The good news is that with a little planning, you can celebrate the season with a sparkling tree and keep your best friend safe. Here are six tips to dog-proof your tree and make it your pup's safest and happiest Christmas yet.

1. Make Your Tree Sturdy and Secure

Whether it's artificial or the real deal, Christmas trees are usually quite heavy — and you don't want your tree tipping over onto your presents, or your pup! To keep your tree from falling over, secure it to a wall or ceiling with fishing line. If that's not an option, make sure to use a sturdy, wide base that will hold the Christmas tree in place all season long.

2. Decorate out of Your Dog's Reach

Christmas lights can make your tree twinkle, but they can also get hot — and your pup might think they look fun to chew. To help keep your dog safe, keep lights confined to the top half of your tree and be sure to firmly tape cords to the wall or floor. Regularly check the cords to see if you notice any signs of chewing.

Tinsel is another decoration that looks lovely, but can block your dog's intestines if eaten. If tinsel is a must, carefully trim only the top half of the tree. You might feel even better about your best friend's safety if you don't use the shiny temptation at all.

3. Deck the Tree with Twine

Ornaments can be a real eye-catcher for your playful little dog, so be sure to keep them high out of reach. To be extra careful, use twine, yarn or ribbons rather than traditional wire hooks to hang your ornaments. These options are more secure and less likely to scratch your pup if he or she does get ahold of an ornament.

4. Food Is for Feasting, Not Trimming

There are few things a dog loves more than food. Decorating your tree with sweet treats like popcorn, candy canes and gingerbread will make your dog curious to find out how high he or she can climb. To keep your pup's appetite and climbing adventures in check, save food for dinner plates and dog bowls, not Christmas decorations. Instead, you could start a nightly Christmas treat tradition — Santa's helpers need dog snacks, too!

5. Keep the Tree Area Clean

Real trees shed their needles and artificial trees can become brittle over time. Make sure to regularly clean the area around your tree so that your four-legged friend isn't tempted to taste a pine needle. If eaten, pine needles can be irritating to your dog's stomach and intestines.

When all the Christmas presents have been opened, be sure to pick up all the ribbon, paper, strings and toy pieces that might be left scattered around your tree. You don't want your pup mistaking these choking hazards for his or her Christmas toys!

6. Admire from Afar

Christmas trees are a beautiful tradition that humans (and dogs) love to admire. If you'd like extra reassurance that your favorite little Christmas elf won't be tempted by the tree, set it up in a room that can be closed off from the rest of your home, or install a baby or pet gate in the doorway of the tree room. There's no greater gift than peace of mind.

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