



How to Get the Best Holiday Photos with Your Dog

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Picture this: your dog, or your dog and family, happily posing with Santa. What a perfect holiday card to mail to all your friends and family or proudly display on your mantel! If you prepare and put a little creativity into your photo project, you're sure to collect plenty of social media likes, plus in-person oohs and awws from your picture-perfect holiday shots. Here are a few ideas for snapping the best pictures possible.

Go with the Pros

Some professionals photograph pets all the time. This means they're really good at getting great shots, and it's usually not hard to find them. Check out their online portfolios and, if you like what you see, schedule a session. They'll advise you about how to prepare for the shoot and take care of the rest. But keep in mind that they'll likely cost more than other options.

A quick online search will find dozens of pet stores, shelters and more places near you offering a Santa happy to pose with pups and a photographer ready to snap festive photos. Some setups will even supply holiday props like Santa hats and reindeer antlers for your

dog to wear. This usually means a fee, but sometimes it goes to a dog-related cause — a great way to spread holiday cheer!

Is Santa Ready for Your Dog?

Jolly Old Saint Nicholas may not click with your dog, nor your dog with him. Young children who excitedly talk about Santa for months on end sometimes shrink in terror at the sight of the real Claus, so we certainly don't expect all dogs to take to a big, bearded man in a bright red suit.

Consider your dog's general demeanor and response to strangers. For example, how did your dog react to the costumed kids who visited last Halloween? Don't attempt to sit your pup on Santa's lap if they don't go for that sort of thing.

If Santa's a no-go, you still have lots of options. Dress up Dad or someone your dog knows and loves, and have a photo shoot at home. You can pose around your tree or other holiday decorations, or even venture out to a public holiday display in your community.



Do It Yourself

If you and your dog are already photo session pros, you should be ready for "Lights, camera, action!" But even if your dog is supremely intelligent, they may not respond to direction as well as a professional model — especially if you add in holiday props and unfamiliar backdrops. Let your dog be a dog, sniff around and get comfortable with the surroundings before you shoot. Then, it's up to you to take lots of shots from a variety of angles and to choose the most adorable to show the world.

It's better to wait for your dog to look at the camera after they get used to the scene than to keep trying to direct them. It's also smart to have a selection of props handy and find one that works for both of you, rather than insisting your dog wear the one you like best.

Keep a Treat Up Your Sleeve

The holidays are a great time of year for baking and enjoying tasty treats, from Christmas cookies to figgy pudding and beyond. Don't forget to share the yummy fun with your dog with their favorite Cesar treats. Treats can be a great motivator during a photo shoot or a tasty reward for doing such a good job, whether you go to Santa or hold your holiday photo session at home.

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