



THE BLUE CROSS

ANIMAL WELFARE CHARITY



Fireworks & Pets

“Remember, remember the 5th of November” ... but please don't forget your pets. Every year thousands of animals will suffer as a result of the festivities. Blue Cross animal hospitals across the country see a marked rise in pets requiring medication to calm them during this stressful period, and many animals are brought into Blue Cross adoption centres having run away from home.

Animals also have very acute hearing, and loud bangs and whistles cause them actual pain in their ears. But by following these simple guidelines your pet need not suffer.



“Remember, remember the 5th of No

DOGS AND CATS

ALWAYS keep dogs and cats inside when fireworks are being let off.

ALWAYS close all windows and doors, and block off catflaps to stop pets escaping and to keep noise to a minimum. Draw the curtains, and put the TV or radio on to block out some of the noise of the fireworks.


NEVER take your dog to a firework display. Even if your dog does not bark or whimper at fireworks it doesn't mean he's happy. Behaviour such as panting and yawning can indicate that your dog is stressed.

NEVER tie your dog up outside while fireworks are being let off, i.e. outside a shop whilst you pop inside, or leave them in the garden.

ALWAYS make sure your pet is wearing ID – even in the house. Ideally they should have a collar and tag and a microchip, so that if they do run away they have a better chance of being returned to you.

NEVER walk your dog while fireworks are going off. Make sure your dog is walked earlier in the day before the fireworks start.

Prepare a 'den' for your pet so he can feel comfortable, perhaps under a bed with some of your old clothes where he can hide when the fireworks start.



If your pet does panic and hide in a corner leave him alone and do not try to coax him out. He is just trying to make himself feel safer and should not be disturbed.

NEVER shout at your pet if he is frightened, as you will only make him more stressed.

Ignore your pet if he paces around or whines, and do not reassure him as this will only make him think there is really something to worry about.

Stay calm and act normally. Praise your pet when he is calm.



If you leave your pet alone and come back to find that he has been destructive, do not punish him as this shows he must have been terrified. Try not to leave him alone again during this period.

SMALL ANIMALS

Rabbits, guinea pigs, ferrets and birds all need to be treated with special care when fireworks are being let off. These animals are easily frightened, and can die of heart attacks as a result of the loud noise. The Blue Cross advises that owners of small animals should follow these precautions.

Hutches and enclosures should be brought into a cool, quiet room indoors, or into a garage or shed.

Give your pet extra bedding to burrow into so he feels safe.

If you cannot bring your pet's hutch inside, you should turn its enclosure around so that it faces a wall or fence instead of the open garden.

Cover any aviaries or hutches with thick blankets or a duvet to block out the sight of the fireworks and deaden the sound of the bangs, but make sure there is enough ventilation.

HORSES AND PONIES

Fireworks must not be set off near livestock or horses in fields. Anyone planning a firework display in a rural area should warn neighbouring farmers in advance.

Obviously try to make sure that fireworks are never set off near your horse's field or stable. Wherever possible tell neighbours and local fireworks display organisers that there are horses nearby so that they can ensure fireworks are set off in the opposite direction to them.

Unfortunately we are often not forewarned about private fireworks displays so think and plan ahead for 5th November and New Year's eve and be

but please don't forget your pets.

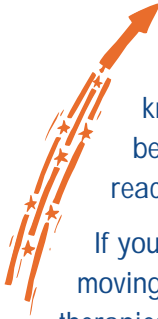


proactive about finding out when other celebratory occasions involving fireworks might occur.



Preferably keep your horse in his familiar environment and in his normal routine with his companions, which will give him security.

If your horse is usually stabled keep him stabled, if he is normally out in the field keep him there as long as it is safe, secure and not near the fireworks display area.



Ensure that you or someone experienced stays with your horse if you know that fireworks are being set off. This way you can observe his behaviour, ensure that he remains safe and respond accordingly to his reactions the next time.

If you know your horse reacts badly, speak to your vet or perhaps consider moving him for the night. It's also worth looking at the benefits of complementary therapies to help your horse stay calm.

If your horse is distressed don't 'over comfort' him as he will sense your anxiety – remain calm and positive.

Take care not to get in the way if your horse becomes stressed as you may get hurt.

Don't take the risk of riding when you think fireworks might be set off.

If you have to leave your horse in the care of another person ensure that you leave clear instructions and contact details for your vet should any problems arise.



THE BLUE CROSS

The Blue Cross is Britain's pet charity, providing information, advice and practical support for pet and horse owners. Through our network of animal adoption centres we rehome thousands of animals each year. Our hospitals provide veterinary care for the pets of people who cannot afford private vets' fees.

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