

The Top Ten Reasons It's Risky to Keep Your Dog Outside

Dogs are pack animals and highly social. Once they have forged a bond with you, they enjoy spending their time and home with you. In fact, they thrive on your companionship and flourish with your interaction. When you become a pet parent, your dog wants to be with you as much as possible. He is also a den animal, meaning that he enjoys having a safe, quiet, comfortable and secure place to spend his time. A dog who literally lives in your home tends to be much more sociable, friendly, relaxed and happy. Generally, dogs have a great ability to learn and to be housetrained. They desire little more from you than love and affection.

Dogs that live outside or in the backyard are generally isolated and lonely. They tend to be more stressed, anxious and bored. Frustrated, they frequently demonstrate undesirable behaviors such as digging up your flowers and shrubs, chewing, howling or whining, barking excessively or escaping. They are subject to the elements and do not experience the same level of love, attention and companionship as indoor dogs. There are many reasons I believe it is risky/dangerous to leave your dog in the backyard.

- 1). Your dog may become a nuisance to the neighborhood and cause neighbors to harm him to eliminate the problem.
- 2). Someone may steal your dog from the yard.
- 3). Someone may deliberately attempt to poison your dog as a means of “getting back at you” or simply to hurt the animal.
- 4). Your dog can contract illness or health problems from constant exposure to the varying elements – frost, freezing cold, rain, snow, thunder, lightning, intense heat, etc.
- 5). Your animal may be taunted verbally and/ or experience physical abuse from neighbors or their kids – I have rescued many a dog who has been on the receiving end of rocks, sticks, glass bottles, etc.
- 6). Your pet may be accidentally released from your yard by gardeners, meter readers, repair people – who inadvertently allow the dog to escape and potentially get injured, hit by a car, picked up by Animal Control, etc.
- 7). Your pet can receive insect bites, i.e. from wasps or bees or even flies and wounds caused by other animals which can easily become infected and cause serious illness.
- 8). Your dog may experience and exhibit frustration and aggression toward people and other dogs resulting from being kept alone in the yard.
- 9). Your pet may develop obsessive behaviors such as chewing himself, chasing his tail, snapping at flying insects, eating dirt, etc.

10). He may suffer from frostbite in winter or heat or sunstroke in hot weather.

Most importantly, your pet, if kept outside, will suffer from the lack of contact, attention and interaction with you. Keep in mind that most dog psychologists believe that dogs kept isolated in backyards develop serious behavioral and personality disorders that frequently result in euthanasia.