

## Title: "Creating a Pet-Safe Garden"



As spring approaches, many of us spend our leisure time outdoors tending to our gardens. Frequently, we invite our pets to join us outside. For pet owners with outdoor space, it's essential to create a safe and enjoyable area for our pets. A pet-friendly garden offers many benefits, including exercise, mental stimulation, and bonding time with your pets. In this month's blog, the team here at **[Hospital Name]** wanted to share valuable tips to help you make the most of your garden by creating a pet-friendly environment.

### Selecting Pet-Safe Plants:

It is crucial to choose non-toxic plants when planning your garden, as this can prevent your pets from accidentally ingesting harmful substances that may cause symptoms such as:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Excessive drooling
- Loss of appetite
- Changes in behavior such as lethargy or agitation
- Difficulty breathing
- Rapid heart rate
- Seizures

Creating a pet-friendly outdoor environment requires thoughtful consideration. While many garden plants offer aesthetic appeal, some can pose serious health risks to curious pets. For instance, azaleas, lilies, tulips, daffodils, and chrysanthemums are commonly found in gardens but can be toxic if ingested by pets.

To protect your furry friends, opt for plants that not only add beauty to your garden but also ensure your pets' safety. Marigolds, snapdragons, and sunflowers are two flowers that will add bursts of color to your garden while keeping your pets safe because these flowers are non-toxic for pets. Magnolia bushes are another great choice because they offer beautiful blooms and are safe for pets, giving you peace of mind while your pet enjoys your garden. Creeping thyme is also a safe plant for pets. Planting Creeping Thyme and Pet Grass will allow your pet to explore some ground cover without worry.

Before selecting plants for your garden, take some time to research if they are safe for pets. Additionally, consulting with gardening experts or veterinary professionals can provide helpful guidance in creating a garden that you and your pets can enjoy safely. If you have any concerns, don't hesitate to call us at **[phone number]**. We're happy to answer any questions you might have!

### **Creating Designated Pet Areas**

Creating dedicated spaces in your garden for your pets to play, explore, and relax enriches their outdoor experience and significantly enhances their safety. Introducing elements like well-defined paths for your pets to follow, tunnels for them to investigate, and sandpits to dig in, will stimulate their natural instincts and provide an outlet for their energy.

In addition, consider constructing fences or natural barriers like hedges, flower beds, or decorative rocks. These can help to delineate pet-friendly zones and restrict your pets' access to certain areas of the garden where they might encounter potential hazards, such as toxic plants, garden tools, or chemicals.

You can equip your designated pet-friendly areas with amenities like shady spots for rest, structures to protect from weather and the elements, and water stations for hydration.

It's also worth considering the individual needs and habits of your pets. For instance, if your pet likes to burrow, a dedicated area with safe digging spots might be a great addition. If your pet is an active explorer, create a sensory path with various textures and scents. Remember, tailoring these zones to your pet's specific needs and preferences can enrich their enjoyment and interaction with the outdoor space.

### **Choosing Pet-Safe Garden Accessories:**

Choosing appropriate garden accessories is another essential aspect of creating a pet-friendly garden. Simply planting pet-safe plants may not be enough. Look for pet-friendly fertilizers that don't contain harmful chemicals, and either finely shredded or leaf mulch, which will not harm your pet if ingested.

If you decide to furnish your garden, invest in strong, chew-resistant, and weather-resistant pieces that won't break apart. Think about adding a toy basket to your garden, including some weather-resistant, waterproof toys for your pets to play with while spending time outside. Always ensure that any garden accessories you select are non-toxic and safe for pets to interact with, or kept securely out of reach of your pet.

### **Minimizing Hazards:**

In your garden, make sure to regularly assess and minimize any potential hazards to your pet. Securely store any sharp tools and chemicals out of your pet's reach. If you do use any chemicals in your garden, limit your pet's access to all areas where chemicals were sprayed.

Also, be mindful of stagnant water. Ponds, pools, and water features can pose multiple risks to pets. Any open water can be a drowning hazard. Therefore, it's vital that you closely monitor your pets when they are near water. Consider covering or fencing off pools or ponds to keep your pets away from them. Standing water can also attract unwanted insects like mosquitoes, fleas, and ticks. It is essential to keep your pets up to date on their preventative medications.

### **Preventing Fleas, Ticks, and Heartworms**

Protecting your pets against pests such as fleas, ticks, and heartworms should be a priority year-round, but it becomes especially important when spending a lot of time outdoors. Regularly administering preventative treatments is the best way to protect your pet. You can also help prevent pests by keeping your garden tidy and free from stagnant water or tall grass where these pests thrive.

If you notice any unusual behavior or symptoms in your pet, such as excessive scratching, unexplained weight loss, or lethargy, it could be a sign of a flea or tick infestation or heartworm disease, and you should contact us as soon as possible for treatment.

### **Maintaining a Clean and Healthy Environment:**

Maintaining a clean and healthy environment is crucial for your pets' overall well-being. Regular grooming, efficient waste disposal, and effective pest control measures are essential in preventing infestations of fleas and ticks in your pet. Look for eco-friendly

options when maintaining your garden to avoid using chemicals harmful to your pets. Consider using natural compost instead of chemical fertilizers, and planting pest-repelling plants like citronella, lemongrass, and marigold. Regularly cleaning your pet's outdoor toys and shelters will prevent the build-up of bacteria and pests. By maintaining cleanliness and hygiene, you provide a safer and healthier outdoor environment for your pets.

In short, creating a pet-friendly garden requires selecting non-toxic plants, minimizing potential hazards, and incorporating pet-friendly features. Always prioritize the safety of your pets when designing your outdoor spaces. Each pet is unique and may require different considerations, so take the time to understand their needs and preferences. We hope this blog post has provided valuable guidance for all pet owners looking to create a safe, enjoyable, and pet-friendly garden environment. Happy gardening!