



Let's face it; pets are bound to get into a little trouble around the house. But from its open canisters to its loose wires, your home can pose some serious problems for your furry companions. While cats like to crawl into small nooks and crannies, dogs prefer chewing and consuming anything they can get their paws on. So, what's a pet owner to do? You can help your pets stay safe — and safeguard your home décor — with these simple pet-proofing tips.

1. Keep the Toilet Closed

Since cats and dogs are always on the lookout for a cool water source, some pets view toilet water as a tasty solution. Not only is toilet water extremely dirty, but it also contains potent chemicals that can lead to pet poisoning. This dangerous situation can be avoided by keeping your toilets closed when they're not in use.

2. Lay a Blanket on It

You can protect your beloved furniture with **throw blankets**! Drape one over your couch or place one on your bed to create a cozy space for your pets to rest. Soft to the touch, these blankets act as a barrier, preventing pet hair, mud and even claw marks from ruining your favorite furnishings.

3. Know Your Houseplants

If your home is full of flora, you may want to reconsider some of your houseplants. Why? Well, over 200 plant varieties are extremely toxic to pets. When ingested by animals, certain plants (including irises, azaleas and Easter lilies) can cause gastrointestinal distress and even result in death. To keep your pets out of peril, swap out unsafe plant life with any of these nontoxic options:

- African Violets - Impatiens - Begonias - Orchids - Daisies
- Roses - Dracaenas - Snapdragons - Ferns - Spider Plants

4. Discourage Counter-Surfing Pets

Counter-surfing is a common behavior that some pet owners can't stand. Luckily, you can break the habit a few different ways. Try lining the edges of your countertops with **double-sided tape**, **bubble wrap** or **aluminum foil**. Because both cats and dogs have sensitive paw pads, they will avoid touching surfaces that are sticky, coarse or uneven. In just a couple of weeks, counter-surfing will no longer be a concern.

5. Control those Cords

Pets and cables just don't mix. While many pets find pleasure in chewing on electrical cords, they put themselves in harm's way with each nibble. You can remove the temptation altogether by covering loose cables with a **Flexiduct Cord Cover**. Made with abrasion-resistant plastic, this durable cover hides exposed cords from pets in plain sight.

Another way to discourage cord chewing is by coating your cords in **Masterpaws® Chew Stop All-Natural Bitter Spray** or **Irish Spring® Original Deodorant Soap**. Each solution will protect your cords by masking them in an unpleasant aroma that also leaves a bitter taste in the mouth.

6. Put Pet Gates in Place

Set some boundaries at home with pet gates. When you're busy making dinner or folding laundry, it can be difficult to keep your eyes on those pets. Rather than track their every move, you can contain the situation with a pet gate or two. A **Carlson™ Extra-Tall Pet Gate** will limit their access to certain areas of your house by barring doorways or stairwells. For truly devious dogs, you can also try a **Carlson™ Convertible Pet Gate**. Made of chew-proof metal, this freestanding gate configures to fit any room, providing your pets with a temporary play space when supervision isn't possible.

7. Stop Trash Attacks

Pets love stealing things from the garbage. So, to stop them from eating and swallowing something unsavory, you should consider upgrading your trash cans. Ideally, you'll want something with a lid. Step-on wastebaskets are excellent choices because most pets don't understand that they have to step on the foot pedal to open or close the trash bin.

8. Remove Laundry Room Hazards

The laundry room is a dangerous place for pets, especially cats. Known for their heat-seeking tendencies, cats are always looking for a warm place to rest. You can prevent your cat from climbing inside your washing machine and/or dryer by always keeping the doors shut. And before you start your next load of laundry, sweep the interior to make sure your cat isn't hiding in there.