

What can I do on the night?

There are several things you can do on the night to prepare:

- Take your dog for a walk well before fireworks are due to begin.
- Keep doors, windows and dog flaps closed.
- Draw the curtains and play music with a repetitive beat to help mask the sounds. Why not make your own play list of your dog's favourite tunes!
- If your dog prefers to go away and hide, let them. Leave them alone and don't try to comfort them—this is their way of coping.
- Stay calm yourself. Keep your tone, mood and behaviour as normal as possible. If you get very anxious or comfort your dog more than usual, this can make your dog more unsettled.
- Never punish your dog. It's not their fault that they're scared and it adds to their anxiety.
- A high carbohydrate meal an hour before you expect fireworks can help them feel sleepy.

Is there any medication that I can use?

Some drugs that were popular are no longer used because they don't reduce the fear but more the animal's ability to respond to it. This can make your dog's fear of fireworks even worse. There are products licensed for use with firework phobias that may help to reduce their anxiety and the vet can talk to you about the options available.

Book in for a complimentary consultation to discuss your specific needs and products that might help.

Consulting Times

Hillock Lane Surgery

Monday to Friday
8.30am to 7pm

Saturday
8.30am to 1pm



Blackpool Surgery

Monday to Friday
8.30am to 6pm

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Hillock Lane



Blackpool



Helping your Dog during Firework Season

Rowan Veterinary Centre

"where pets come first"

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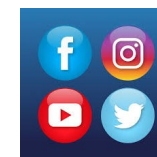
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Fear of Fireworks

Lots of pets are anxious and frightened of fireworks and other loud, unexpected noises. A 2018 Paw Report found that around 40% of owners of dogs reported that their pet was afraid of fireworks, loud bangs and high pitched sounds. It



can be VERY scary for your dog but luckily with the right care you can help to keep your pet calm and help them cope.

Signs of stress in your dog

If your pet is showing any of the following visible signs, they might be finding firework season stressful:

- Trembling and shaking.
- Clinging to owners.
- Excessive barking.
- Cowering and hiding behind furniture.
- Trying to run away.
- Going to the toilet in the house.
- Pacing and panting.
- Refusing to eat.



How can I help them not be afraid?

Start early!!! Good socialisation is key. Getting them used to common sights and sounds as a puppy will help your dog grow up to be a calm and confident adult. You can do this

your everyday activities but for specific sounds, like fireworks or thunder storms, you can access CDs or sounds on YouTube that you can use at home. It is always very important to follow the guidelines when using these sound tracks to ensure exposure is gradual and at your own dog's pace. Introducing them too quickly could have the opposite desired effect.



What can I do if my dog is older and already scared?

There's lots you can do to help them cope. A couple of months before you can use sound tracks to slowly and carefully introduce them and get them used to the sounds. Start at the lowest possible volume and very gradually increase the volume and the duration of the sounds each day over a period of weeks. If your dog shows ANY signs of stress or anxiety at any point in the process, it is very important to go back to a stage where they felt more comfortable and only progress when they are calm. Reward and praise is very important when calm behaviours are being displayed.

What else can I do to help them cope?

Different pets cope with the noise of fireworks in different ways but you can do some things that might help:

- Let them be near you if that's how they seek reassurance from you in stressful times. This a good short-term solution to help them cope while they're afraid but in the long term, it's important to give your pet an alternative way to cope, just in case you're not there when they're scared.
- Create a safe place to hide, such as a den. Dogs like a den behind a sofa



or in a quiet room or even at the bottom of a cupboard. In the weeks leading up to firework season, give your dog access to this den at all times. Cover the den with blankets and line it with pillows or cushions to absorb some of the noise. Give healthy treats and praise when your dog uses it, to build a positive association but don't force them to use it if they prefer to hide somewhere else.

- Use a pheromone plug-in. This is a product that emits a scent that calms dogs but we can't smell it. They are available from the vet or pet stores.



- Make a note of the dates of local firework displays as this will help you to plan ahead and make sure you can be as prepared as possible and be there for your pet when they need you.