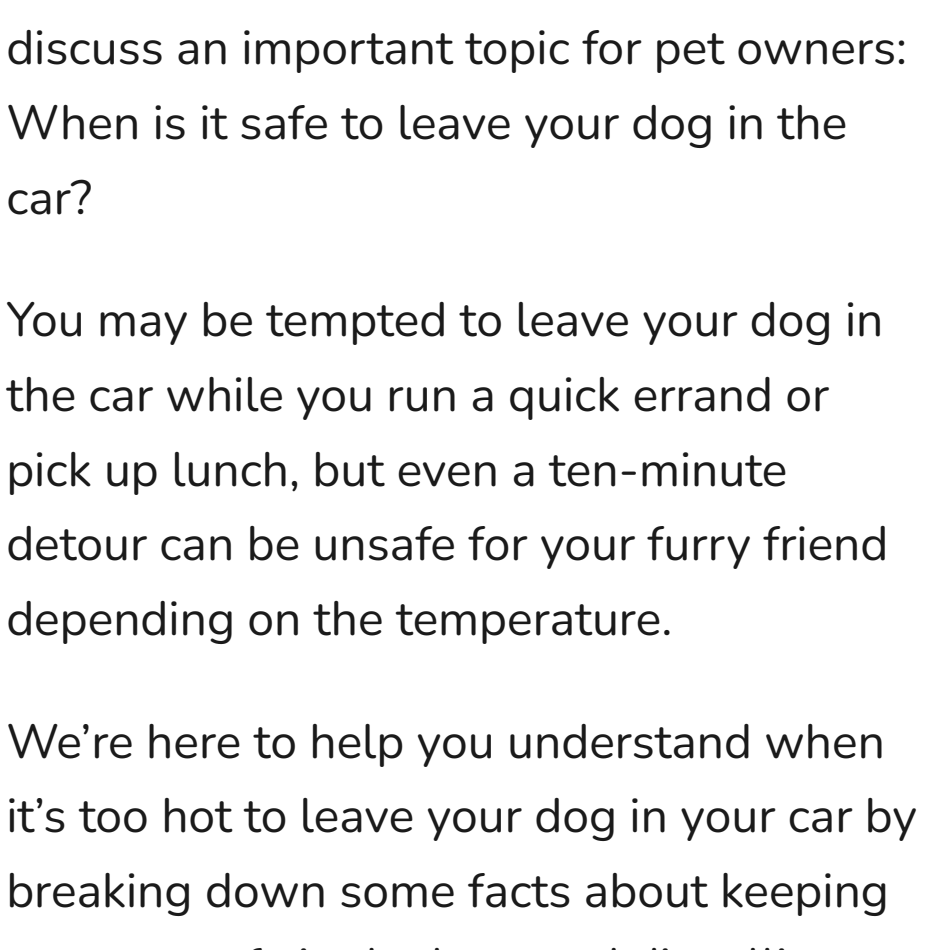


# How Hot is Too Hot to Leave a Dog In a Car?

Written by [Dr. Joshua Montgomery](#)  
• Medically reviewed by [Laura Fontana, DVM](#)

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With the weather warming up, it's time to discuss an important topic for pet owners: When is it safe to leave your dog in the car?

You may be tempted to leave your dog in the car while you run a quick errand or pick up lunch, but even a ten-minute detour can be unsafe for your furry friend depending on the temperature.

We're here to help you understand when it's too hot to leave your dog in your car by breaking down some facts about keeping your pet safe in the heat and dispelling some myths along the way.

### Key Takeaways:

- You should never leave your dog alone in the car when the outside temperature is below freezing or above 70 degrees.
- Dogs with thicker fur or short skulls (brachycephalic breeds) are more susceptible to heat stroke.
- It is never safe to leave a dog alone in a car, even with the windows down.
- If you do need to run an errand with your dog in the car, you should be gone no longer than five minutes.

## Dogs and Heat Stroke

Before discussing when it's too hot to leave your dog in the car, it's important to understand some of the risks hot weather can pose to your pet. [The American Kennel Club](#) emphasizes that all [dogs are susceptible to heat stroke](#) which can leave them disoriented, uncomfortable, and in severe cases, unconscious with kidney failure and other complications that could lead to death.

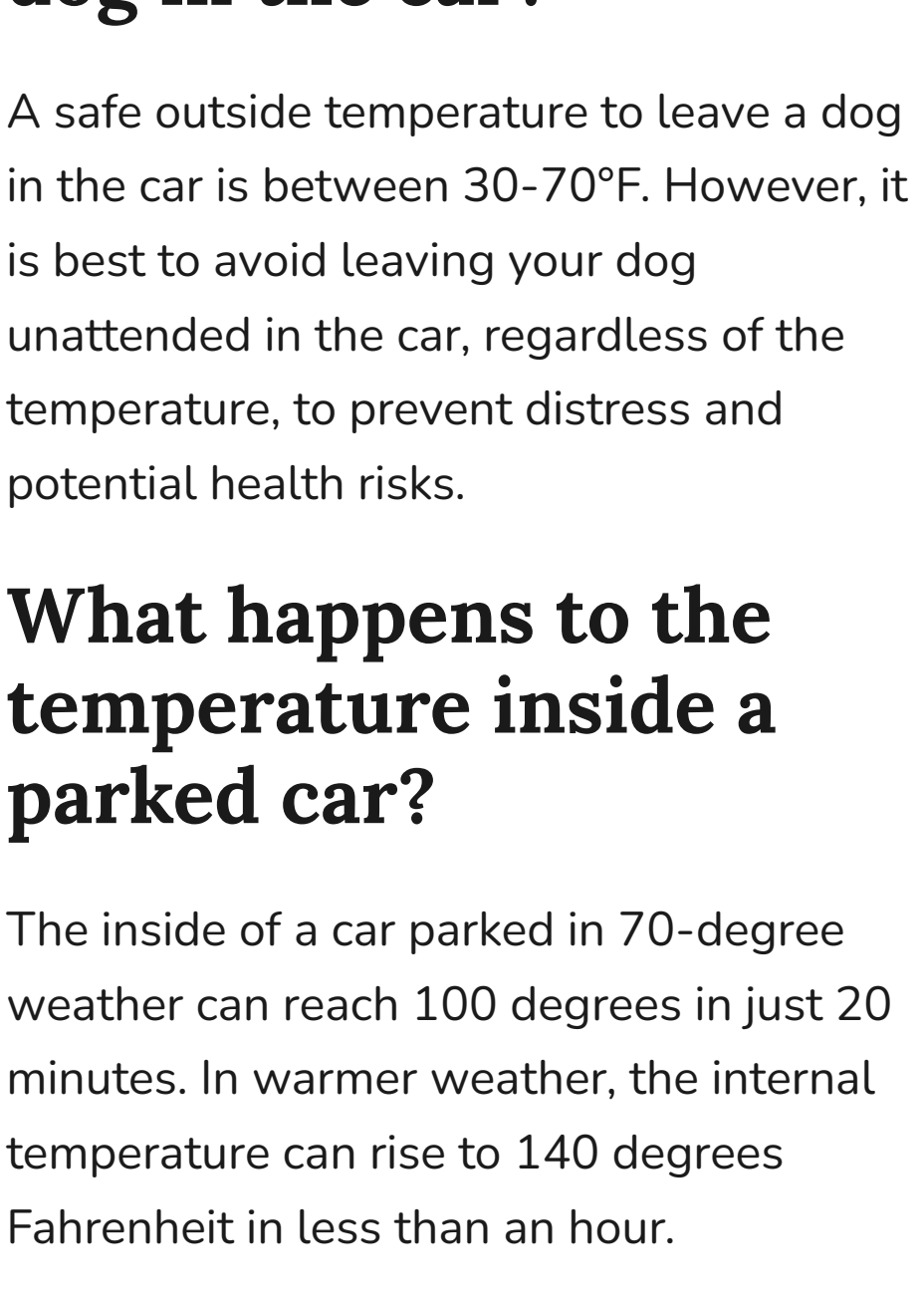
Any hot environment, like a locked car parked in the sun, can cause heat stroke. If you have a dog with thicker fur or a broad short skull (known as [brachycephalic breeds like pugs and bulldogs](#)), you should take extra precautions to ensure they don't overheat because they are more susceptible to these negative effects.

## When is it Too Hot to Leave a Dog in the Car?

You should never leave your dog alone in the car when the outside temperature is below freezing or above 70 degrees. Heat stroke in dogs can occur even in moderate temperatures.

According to the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#), the inside of a car parked in 70-degree weather can easily reach [100 degrees in just 20 minutes](#). In even warmer weather, idle cars can reach an internal temperature of 140 degrees Fahrenheit in less than an hour.

These extreme temperatures can be life-threatening to dogs. Always prioritize their safety and never leave them unattended in a vehicle.



## Can You Leave a Dog in the Car with Windows Open?

It is never safe to leave a dog alone in a car, even with the windows down. Heatstroke and dehydration can occur rapidly, especially in warmer temperatures. Cracking the windows may provide some ventilation, but it does not lower the temperature inside the car enough to make it safe for your pet.

It is best to leave your dog at home or bring them with you when running errands, or having someone else in the car with them, keeping the air conditioner on, and monitoring him or her for signs of overheating.

## BetterVet's Approach to Care Dogs in Car

[Car rides can be a stressful event for many dogs](#), and leaving them alone even for a minute can add to these feelings of separation anxiety. At BetterVet, our team of experienced veterinary technicians can come to you. Our Fear Free® mobile veterinary care uses tasty treats and our knowledge of dog behavior for a stress-free appointment from the comfort of your own home.

If you have more questions about how to [keep your dog safe during the hot summer months](#), our vets are happy to help. Contact the team at BetterVet today to learn more about our [mobile veterinarian services](#).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a safe temperature to leave a dog in the car?

A safe outside temperature to leave a dog in the car is between 30–70°F. However, it is best to avoid leaving your dog unattended in the car, regardless of the temperature, to prevent distress and potential health risks.

### What happens to the temperature inside a parked car?

The inside of a car parked in 70-degree weather can reach 100 degrees in just 20 minutes. In warmer weather, the internal temperature can rise to 140 degrees Fahrenheit in less than an hour.

### How can I keep my dog cool during car rides?

Ensure your dog is not left alone in the car for more than five minutes, keep the air conditioner on, and monitor them for signs of overheating.

Need to talk to a vet?

[Book an Appointment](#)

Pet Health Care

Written by **Dr. Joshua Montgomery**

Veterinarian at BetterVet Seattle

Dr. Joshua Montgomery is a highly experienced veterinarian for BetterVet based out of our Seattle, WA area. He received his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) from Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in 2007 and has over 16 years experience in treating animals. His expertise is educating pet owners on common pet health problems and providing them with option-based care to help choose what is best for their companions.

Medically reviewed by **Laura Fontana, DVM**

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