

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

How to: Keep Pets Out of the Garden

In addition to pests like wild animals or insects wreaking havoc on your garden, your own domesticated pets can cause problems as well. Pets will eat vegetables that appear inviting, dig holes in the freshly turned soil or potentially walk through new seedlings and cause damage when the seedlings are young and easy to harm.

There are several options to keep your pets out of the garden without harming them. While gardeners may not mind if their chemicals or organic methods harm insects or other pests, domesticated pets are a part of the family and a different story.

Using spice:

Although spicy might be appealing to humans, it isn't appealing to dogs. A good option to try is keeping your dogs out of the gardens is by mixing equal parts crushed dried peppers and powdered mustard. Sprinkle the mixture around your garden and see if your pets continue their path of destruction. You may need to reapply after a rain, as water will decrease the mixture's potency.

Using coffee:

In addition to disliking spice, dogs also aren't big fans of anything bitter tasting. Dissolve some bitter orange on used coffee grounds. The coffee grounds will help fertilize your garden, and the bitter orange will resist rain.

Barriers:

Another option to keep dogs out is by setting up a physical barrier. Dogs, unlike



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deer, won't go to the ends of the earth to get past your fencing, even if it's homemade. Creating a barrier to keep your pets out of the garden doesn't have to be costly or time consuming - it can be as simple as spearing twigs or sticks into a homemade barrier around your plants.

Using water:

Set up sprinklers or, when you're hand watering, splash some water on your pet when it begins to snoop in the garden. Dogs learn quick when water is used, and they will do just about anything to avoid getting sprayed.

When digging is the problem:

Sometimes, it's not the eating the vegetables or running over seedlings that's the problem - it's the digging. Sometimes, dogs are digging just because they like to dig, so some gardeners have seen success with



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creating a designated dig pit for their pet to go crazy in. If that doesn't work, go to the trouble of burying blown-up balloons in your garden. Be sure to position the balloon in the area your dog likes to dig, and when the dog strikes the balloon with its paws, the loud noise of the balloon popping may startle your dog enough to prevent it from digging in your garden in the future. For gardeners who appreciate design and a bit of a challenge, try building a moat around your garden. It creates an interesting aesthetic while also likely preventing your dog from crossing over to get to the garden or flower beds.



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