

itch.

How to Create the Perfect Pet Den

What you'll need:

- A large sheet or blanket
- An old T-shirt or duvet
- Your pet's bed or blanket
- Your pet's favourite toys
- A food and water bowl



Step 1

Find the perfect spot

Before you start building anything, you need to think carefully about where your new den is going to go. Think about your pet's routine. Where do they go when you're at home? Do they have a favourite spot they like to curl up? Thinking about where your pet naturally spends their time will give you an idea of suitable places to create your den, and it will also encourage your pet to use it once built.

Top tip: Don't build your pet's den too close to any windows or doors, as fireworks will sound louder in these spots!

Step 2

Build the foundations

Create a 'den' by draping blankets over your pet's crate, over two chairs, your dining table, or hanging a sheet from the ceiling to create a 'teepee'. This will help to muffle any loud bangs, whizzes or shrieks. Adding personal items such as a T-shirt, or even donating your duvet, will help to create a place of safety as your pet will be comforted by your scent and can burrow into the layers.

Top tip: It's a good idea to line the floor of the den with puppy training pads. Even older dogs who are toilet-trained might have an accident when scared.

Step 3

Keep them engaged

This is the part where things - literally - get fun. To help keep your pet distracted from what's happening outside, add some activities, toys and games to your den. Introducing stuffed KONG's, food dispensing toys, or a cardboard puzzle for cats will help keep their attention away from any noises, in turn reducing the level of fear your pet might feel.

Top tip: Let your pet explore their den in their own time. The freedom to visit and leave their den will help to reinforce the idea that they are safe when inside.

Step 4

Make it cosy

Having something to snuggle into is a must when you're feeling scared, and our pets are no different. Fill their den with lots of comfortable items for them to cuddle up against, such as their own bed, more soft blankets or pillows. Soft, cuddly toys would also be a great addition as these are all items your pet will associate with chill out time.

Top tip: Building the den somewhere your pet can see you will also provide them with comfort.

Step 5

Get practical

Once your den is looking snug, it's time to plan the practicalities. Make sure your dog has access to a bowl of water, either inside or nearby their den, and plan ahead for walkies and toilet-time. It's also important to think about the potential dangers such as escape routes including cat flaps and open windows.

Non-slip bowls work best for this, as it will help to avoid spills from any sudden movements your pet may make.

