

# CANINE CORNER

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## Daylight Savings Time



Izzy, the change to daylight savings time is not welcome since I will be asking her to rise a full hour earlier than usual for her morning walk.

I will attempt to ease this transition over the 10 or so days before the clock change by taking her out slightly earlier than normal, although this will require me to awake and rise at progressively earlier times in 15-minute increments.

Most dog owners agree that gaining one hour in autumn is harder to manage in dogs, particularly because feeding time suddenly becomes one hour later and many dogs will act as if their throat has been cut.

Easing the transition to standard time is always advised. Again, I suggest progressively later

On the last Sunday of September, New Zealanders will bring their clocks forward by one hour to go onto daylight savings time.

Many people report that they feel 'off' for the few days after the change each year, thanks to the loss of just one hour of sleep and a rapid change to more daylight. Daylight is the principal cue for our biological clock.

Generally speaking, people report more effects by the loss of the hour in the spring than in the autumn when our country returns to standard time with the gain of an hour.

But what about the impacts on our dogs from changing clocks forward and backward? Daylight drives a dog's activity levels and so they are affected by changes in time; these are in slightly different ways than effects on humans.

Dogs are creatures of habit and routine and anything that changes routine is likely to be noticed. If your dog is reactive or anxious, then these changes in routine can often trigger them.

When the clocks change this month, most dogs will happily accept that you feed them an hour earlier than they have become accustomed to. They'll probably be equally as happy when you get home from work an hour earlier than they expect.

Hopefully, you will start using that extra hour of daylight to take longer walks and adventures with your dog. (In the heat of summer, of course, you'll need those later hours of daylight for walks when the day is cooler.)

For dogs who are not early risers, such as my geriatric Greyhound

feeding times over the 7-10 days before the change.

Since daylight helps to regulate a dog's toileting habits, the change to standard time may cause sudden toilet accidents for dogs left inside during the work day simply because, when darkness falls, they will assume it is later than the clocks would tell us.

Take the time now to write down your tasks for helping your dog manage the transition to daylight savings and set a reminder for yourself when it is time to begin.

Better still, prepare your programme now for the change back to standard time and set a reminder for March, because we return to standard time on 3 April 2022. 🐾



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