

Don't Make Halloween a Horror Show for Your Dog

A Chihuahua Dressed Like a Lobstah Walks into the Bahr

(Just kidding, this is not going to be a bar joke)

During an October trip to Salem, Massachusetts (where Halloween celebrations take place throughout October), I met a Chihuahua in a lobster costume. And was that one angry, little lobster--darn near lost my fingers saying hello. The owner laughed and said, "he hates this costume"! Later in my walk, I met a Doberman in a pink tutu, a Benji-like terrier dressed like batman, a dachshund wearing hot dog buns, and a pit mix in a bumblebee costume.

NONE of them looked all too happy about it.

So, for all you humans out there, please remember that Halloween can be a scary, uncomfortable, even dangerous time for our woofers friends. There's candy to ingest, all sorts of weird humans walking the streets, Halloween decorations to chew and swallow, and strange invaders coming to the door in masks. And, to boot, many people dress their dogs in costumes as well! Now, I can appreciate the cuteness of a dachshund hotdog or a lobstah Chihuahua, but please do remember that many pets find it extremely stressful to be dressed up! (if you're reading this and shaking your head that your dog enjoys this, please watch his or her body language carefully and with a fresh set of eyes--you may realize your dog is NOT happy in costume after all!) Costumes can also be physically uncomfortable, restrict the dogs' ability to hear/see/move (which can be scary in itself!), and draw unwanted attention from strangers (think how a wallflower feels to suddenly be prom queen!).

So, PLEASE consider your dog's safety and stress level on Halloween.

Three nice, short articles on Halloween safety:

- <https://www.aspc.org/pet-care/general-pet-care/halloween-safety-tips>
- https://www.petmd.com/dog/seasonal/evr_multi_halloween_safety_tips
- <https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/halloween.aspx>

To learn more about understanding your dog's body language, check out my "Body Language primer": <https://www.goldstardog.com/visit-the-library-1>



Cora and Mya remain unphased despite the creepy Halloween display behind them. But some dogs might not feel okay with this experience.