

Safety Tips To Pet-Proof Your Bird

Use these tips to keep your bird safe from other pets in your home or to keep your other pets safe from your bird.

By Susan Chamberlain

Safety Tip 1

Place your bird's cage where animals cannot jump onto it or invade its space. Suspend small cages from the ceiling; locate large ones in an easily supervised area, away from furniture and curtains that might facilitate access to birds. A rigid, angled apron surrounding the cage bottom will keep most inquisitive noses and paws out. Separate birds and other animals with a closed door while you're away from home. Ferrets often prey on birds, so house the two as far apart as possible.

Safety Tip 2

Locate birdcages and gyms away from fish tanks and reptile enclosures. Cover tanks to keep birds from falling in and drowning. Wash your hands after handling reptiles to reduce risk of transmitting salmonella to your bird.

Safety Tip 3

A bird stealing food out of an animal's dish, right under its nose might seem funny, but it can also be dangerous. Bacteria in the food may be harmful. If the animal objects to having its food stolen or its territory invaded, it may attack the bird. There are no minor injuries when birds are bitten or scratched by other animals. Dogs and cats harbor pasteurella bacteria in their mouths and an injured bird can become infected, often fatally, if a veterinarian does not immediately begin antibiotic therapy. Make sure your dog understands and obeys the 'No' command.

Safety Tip 4

Some birds enjoy preening the fur of companion animals. Supervise all physical contact between the species. Flea collars and residue from anti-flea products are toxic to birds, so never allow birds near animals or surfaces that have been treated for fleas.

Safety Tip 5

Some birds learn to call pets' names. African grey parrots frequently mimic their owners' voices, confusing the family cat or dog. Playful parrots, such as cockatoos, may lure pets to their cages and pelt them with food and debris.