



July 2, 2018

Dear Oona:

**My humans love the heat.
They swim. They sunbathe.
They like to go to the beach
in the middle of the day and
they like to take me along.
The heat is killing me. How
do I get the message across?**

Buster

Dear Buster:

Since it's July and getting
dangerously hot out there, you
need to convince them fast. If

your body temperature rises just four degrees above normal, you can die, Buster. You're permanently in a fur coat. They are not. It's time to stop being subtle.

Just walking on asphalt in this weather can burn your foot pads. Next time you have the chance, pull a pot of boiling water off on their bare feet. Look at them pointedly. Maybe they'll get the message.

If they're leaving you in a parked car for *any* time at all, bark and look pitiful to every passerby. You've got 15 minutes *tops* before you die. Someone will break a window and get you out of there. Some dog owners have learned this the hard way. With any luck, a policeman will show up and be mean to them, too.

If you're an Irish Wolfhound, do what I do and simply refuse to budge from the couch if it's too hot. They probably won't lug you outside on their shoulder. I won't leave the couch until October unless it's at dawn or past 8 at night. It's Oisín I worry about because he's a boy and he's up for anything if he gets to go with Mom or Dad. Luckily, they make him stay inside when it's too hot.

How much is too hot? For me, it's any day past April or 70 degrees, whichever comes first. Try to walk me after that and I just head for the shade and let *anybody* try to stop me. Some dogs are more timid, I guess.

If your humans are half-way competent, they'll realize that any time your ears, tongue or gums start to turn red, it's time to douse you with lukewarm water and get you in to the air conditioning. July is NOT the time for a day the beach, Buster. Not for you. Heat exhaustion can be quickly followed by heatstroke itself. If they see you staggering or throwing up, it could quickly be too late to help. You could go into shock. You could start having brain seizures, You could die in just no time at all.

So head for the couch. Wish them a a great time at the beach. Complement their tans. But do not budge until it's safe to go outside.

Love, Oona