The Dog-Owner's Yard Plant Guide

Two lists in one. The Front Range yard plants that can poison a dog, sorted worst first with the toxic part and the warning signs, then a starter list of plants the ASPCA rates non-toxic to dogs. Print it, walk your yard, keep the ASPCA line handy.

IF YOUR DOG EATS ONE: CALL ASPCA (888) 426-4435

Every plant here is flagged toxic to dogs. They are sorted worst first. Walk your yard with this, learn the few that can truly hurt a dog, and if your dog eats one, call the number below right away.

THESE CAN BE FATAL. DO NOT WAIT FOR SYMPTOMS.

A small amount of any of these can kill a dog, through the heart, the nerves, or the blood. If you grow one, know it is there, and call the ASPCA line the moment you suspect your dog got into it.

No. 01 !

Yew

FATAL

Taxus species

TOXIC

Taxine A and B, Volatile oil

SIGNS

Tremors, difficulty breathing, vomiting, seizures (dogs), sudden death from acute heart failure.

No. 02 !

Foxglove

FATAL

Digitalis species

TOXIC

Cardiac glycosides

SIGNS

Cardiac arrhythmias, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, cardiac failure, death.

No. 03 !

Lily of the valley

FATAL

Convallaria majalis

TOXIC

Cardenolides (convallarin, and others)

SIGNS

Vomiting, irregular heart beat, low blood pressure, disorientation, coma, seizures

No. 04 !

Milkweed

FATAL

Asclepias species

TOXIC

Some species contain cardiotoxins (steroidal glycosidic cardenolides)...

SIGNS

Vomiting, profound depression, weakness, anorexia, and diarrhea are common; may be followed by seizures, difficulty breathing, rapid, weak pulse...

No. 05

Black locust

FATAL

Robinia pseudoacacia

TOXIC

Toxalbumins: phasin, robin and robitin (bark, leaves and seeds)

SIGNS

Vomiting, depression, anorexia, weakness, difficulty breathing, diarrhea (bloody), death

No. 06

Periwinkle

FATAL

Vinca minor

TOXIC

Vinca Alkaloids

SIGNS

Vomiting, diarrhea, low blood pressure, depression, tremors, seizures, coma, death.

No. 07

Burning bush, winter creeper

FATAL

Euonymus species

TOXIC

Alkaloids, Cardenolides

SIGNS

Vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, weakness. Heart rhythm abnormalities with large doses.

CYANIDE HIDES IN THE CHERRY AND APPLE FAMILIES.

Cherries, plums, and crabapples are everywhere in Front Range yards. The seeds, pits, and especially wilting leaves carry cyanide, so storm-dropped branches are the real risk. The fruit flesh itself is not the problem.

No. 08

Cherry, plum, apricot, chokecherry

CYANIDE

Prunus species

TOXIC

Cyanogenic glycosides found in some species

SIGNS

Stems, leaves, seeds contain cyanide, particularly toxic in the process of wilting: brick red mucous membranes, dilated pupils, difficulty breathing...

No. 09

Crabapple and apple

CYANIDE

Malus species

TOXIC

Cyanogenic glycosides

SIGNS

Stems, leaves, seeds contain cyanide, particularly toxic in the process of wilting: brick red mucous membranes, dilated pupils, difficulty breathing...

THE ONION FAMILY GOES AFTER THE BLOOD.

Ornamental alliums and their kitchen cousins damage a dog's red blood cells, and the harm can show up a few days later, not right away.

No. 10

Ornamental onion

BLOOD

Allium species

TOXIC

N-propyl disulfide

SIGNS

Vomiting, breakdown of red blood cells (hemolytic anemia, Heinz body anemia), blood in urine, weakness, high heart rate, panting.

COMMON YARD PLANTS THAT BRING VOMITING, AND SOMETIMES WORSE.

Rarely fatal, but a sick, miserable dog and a vet bill. Worth knowing what is in reach, especially for a chewer or a new puppy.

No. 11

Buckeye, horsechestnut

TOXIC

Aesculus species

TOXIC

Aesculin (a glycosidic saponin), other saponins

SIGNS

Severe vomiting and diarrhea, depression or excitement, dilated pupils, weakness, unsteadiness, depression, seizures, coma

No. 12

Panicle hydrangea

TOXIC

Hydrangea paniculata

TOXIC

Cyanogenic glycoside

SIGNS

Vomiting, depression, diarrhea. Cyanide intoxication is rare - usually produces more of a gastrointestinal disturbance.

No. 13

Bearded iris

TOXIC

Iris germanica

TOXIC

Pentacylic terpenoids (zeorin, missourin and missouriensin)

SIGNS

Salivation, vomiting, drooling,lethargy, diarrhea. Highest concentration in rhizomes.

No. 14

Hosta

TOXIC

Hosta species

TOXIC

Saponins

SIGNS

Vomiting, diarrhea, depression.

No. 15

Yucca

Yucca species

TOXIC

TOXIC

Saponins

SIGNS

Vomiting

No. 16

Myrtle spurge

Euphorbia myrsinites

TOXIC

TOXIC

Irritant Sap (latex)

SIGNS

Irritating to the mouth and stomach, sometimes causing vomiting, but generally over-rated in toxicity.

No. 17

Clematis

Clematis species

TOXIC

TOXIC

Irritant glycoside (Protoanemonin)

SIGNS

Salivation, vomiting, diarrhea.

No. 18

Black walnut

Juglans nigra

TOXIC

TOXIC

Unknown

SIGNS

moldy nuts/hulls can cause tremors and seizures, ingestion of shavings can cause incoordination

MILD ONLY

Also on our toxic list but usually just an upset stomach: the sages and sagebrush (Artemisia), common yarrow, ornamental oregano, dianthus, primrose, French sorrel, and fleabane.

The other side: Front Range plants that are dog-safe

> Now the good news. Every plant below is on the ASPCA's non-toxic-to-dogs list, matched to plants that grow here. A few carry a one-line note. Non-toxic does not mean every dog or every amount is fine, so if your dog is a determined chewer, still plant with sense and ask your vet when unsure.

TREES

- **Cockspur hawthorn** *Crataegus crus-galli*
- **Thornless honeylocust** *Gleditsia triacanthos*
- **Tuliptree** *Liriodendron tulipifera*
- **American linden, basswood** *Tilia americana*
- **Cucumbertree magnolia** *Magnolia acuminata*
- **Hedge maple** *Acer campestre*
- **White mulberry** *Morus alba*
  > *Ripe berries are fine; the unripe fruit and milky sap can upset a stomach.*
- **Bristlecone pine** *Pinus aristata*
  > *Not a poison, but stiff needles and cones are a choking/poke hazard.*

SHRUBS

- **Rose of Sharon** *Hibiscus syriacus*
- **Oregon grape holly** *Mahonia aquifolium*
- **Shrubby cinquefoil** *Potentilla fruticosa*
- **Wood's wild rose** *Rosa woodsii*
- **Platinum sage (ornamental)** *Salvia daghestanica*
- **Wayfaring tree viburnum** *Viburnum lantana*
  > *The berries can cause mild stomach upset if a dog eats a lot of them.*

GROUNDCOVERS

- **Coral bells, alumroot** *Heuchera sanguinea*
- **Creeping lilyturf** *Liriope spicata*
- **Creeping phlox, moss phlox** *Phlox subulata*
- **Two-row stonecrop** *Sedum spurium*
- **Creeping rosemary** *Salvia rosmarinus*
- **Creeping thyme** *Thymus serpyllum*
  > *The growing plant is safe to brush past; concentrated thyme oil is not.*

PERENNIALS

- **Hardy snapdragon** *Antirrhinum sempervirens*
- **Plains coreopsis** *Coreopsis tinctoria*
- **Bush sunflower** *Helianthus pumilus*
- **Red hot poker** *Kniphofia uvaria*
- **Winter savory** *Satureja montana*
- **Hardy plumbago** *Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*

  > *Hardy plumbago (Ceratostigma), not Cape plumbago (Plumbago auriculata), which is toxic.*

- **Daylily** *Hemerocallis*

  > *Fine for dogs. Daylilies are dangerous to CATS, so skip them in a cat home.*

HOW THIS LIST WAS MADE

Plants cross-referenced against the ASPCA Animal Poison Control non-toxic plant list and the Front Range data, matched by species or genus. Non-toxic to dogs is not a promise of safety for every dog or every amount; cats differ, and notes call out the exceptions.

The danger list is not the whole story: the dog-safe list above is a place to start, but many plants have never been tested, so a plant on neither list is simply unknown. Check anything new with your vet, and browse Front Range plants at coloradogardening.co.

SOURCE

Toxic principle and clinical signs from the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center; the toxic flag is from our Front Range data. A reference, not veterinary advice.