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Living in Maine, I know to how to handle myself on a slippery road or an icy driveway, but my dog, Harley seems to lose all motor skill once that first paw hits the ice. Living in a climate with harsh winters often means living with harsh chemicals that can be hard on our fur babies' feet.

One option is to have your pup wear "booties" to cover the paws, keeping them safe from elements and icy ground conditions. I'm sure many of us have seen the videos of dogs sliding around and other videos of dogs trying out "booties" for the first time. Some mistake these videos as being cruel because it's immediately apparent that the dogs don't like wearing booties, but in actuality the booties will do a lot of good. When you've never worn something and you put it on for the first time it's going to be uncomfortable, thus you will see dogs have trouble walking at first and try to shake the booties off. So how do we teach our dogs to be comfortable in booties? I reached out to Mychelle Blake, the chief executive officer of [the Association of Professional Dog Trainers](#) for some answers.

Mychelle had some great tips to help you get your dog used to booties:

1. "Make sure the booties you buy are waterproof and have good rubber soles that can help the dog to avoid slipping on ice."
2. "When first fitting your dog and acclimating them to the booties, do so in an area of your house without a slippery floor, like linoleum, so the dog has an easier surface to walk on while getting used to them."
3. "Most dogs will not immediately enjoy the sensation of having the boots put on their feet, so work on a gradual desensitization plan. Place a paw on each foot and reward the dog with a good food treat or something else he or she enjoys. Remove the boot and place on

another foot, and then follow the same procedure, rotating to each foot, then put on two feet, then rotate those two feet, until you eventually work up to having the dog wear all four booties at once."

If you find you need help with getting the dog acclimated to the booties, you can contact a professional trainer to help you out. Visit www.apdt.com for a referral to a trainer near you.

If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian -- they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.