

# Summer loving

**Anna Webb** has to keep a close eye on Mini Bull Prudence — come rain or shine.

In addition to her instinctive loathing for water, Prudence is a sun-worshipper — it's a trait hard-wired into the Miniature Bull Terrier DNA. Left unsupervised, she would bake in a suntrap until she was roasted from head to paw.

Black-coated dogs, like Prudence, absorb the sun's rays far more rapidly than white-coated dogs, and her overexcitement at being in the sun on one of our training outings can lead to her almost self-combusting.

I have to keep a close eye on her, ready to pop her into her cooling T-shirt immediately. I take it to events straight out of the freezer — it's rock hard but

thaws just enough to become instant, mobile air-conditioning by the time we arrive.

Setting off at the crack of dawn to the first Countryfile Live show, the weather forecast predicted soaring temperatures of over 30°C. Prudence snoozed on her cool mat with the air-con on, as the sun beat down on my Mini.

I had one of those awful, niggling feelings that I'd forgotten something, and ran through what we had with us: eco-folding bowls, treats, focus toys, a temperature gauge for the back seat, cool mats, frozen bottled water.

I'd left the cooling T-shirt in the freezer. The prospect of

remaining at the busy show, in that heat, without Pru's mobile air-con wasn't appealing.

The sun reached its lunchtime high, and we got lost on the enormous showground trying to find Equafleece, the makers of the cooling T-shirt. Prudence was very hot, delirious in her own 'joie de vivre'. Panting like a train, she lapped up water and attention at the Equafleece stand, where they'd just sold out of her size. Seeing my distress, the company's director, Mary Leigh, stepped in and altruistically let us borrow her own dog's blue T-shirt for the day.

If we haven't got the sun to worry about, it's the rain. Prudence will swerve a large puddle on the pavement, and hates the hosepipe. I don't even know if she can swim.

I booked Prudence and English Toy Terrier, Dexter, on a little cruise down the River Severn for a desensitisation experience. It was a glorious, sunny day, and the cruises were packed.

Pru needed plenty of beef jerky to get down the ramp heading towards the river. Once onboard, she switched into 'train travel' mode, coping admirably with excited people in a tight space — quite the seasoned traveller! The waters were calm, but I hadn't given Prudence any breakfast, and I'd brought a robust paper bag, just in case.

She took to her nautical position at the helm like a duck to water. Enjoying the skipper's commentary as we floated along, her halo gleamed in the sunlight.

As we pulled up to the mooring ramp, the 70-plus passengers began applauding the skipper for our journey. Prudence went mad — screaming, wriggling, and yelping. While I may have worked on her hydrophobia, clearly there was much more to be done where applause was concerned.



## ABOUT ANNA

Anna Webb is co-presenter of BBC London's 'The Barking Hour' and also appeared regularly on 'The Alan Titchmarsh Show'. She recently moved out of London to enjoy an alternative lifestyle with her pets. Find out more at [www.annawebb.co.uk](http://www.annawebb.co.uk)



The loaned T-shirt worked wonders.



Anna, Pru, and Dexter enjoy some shade.



Pru takes to the river like a pro.