

## **Who Will Care For My Dog While I am on Vacation?**

In order to really enjoy your next vacation, it is important to make sure that your dog is well taken care of while you are away from home. You have a variety of options including sending your dog to a boarding kennel, hiring a dog sitter to stay at your home or asking a friend or relative to take your dog into their home. There are benefits and drawbacks to each arrangement but, if you carefully consider your options then you can make a decision that works best for you and your dog.

### **Boarding Kennels**

Good boarding kennels may seem more like summer camp for dogs than the old fashioned cage lined kennels that you might imagine. If your dog easily adapts to new situations and likes the company of other dogs then a kennel might be a vacation for him while you are enjoying your own trip. Before you decide on a kennel, there are some important questions that you should ask the kennel staff. First, ask how much time your dog will be caged and where he will be when he is not caged. Ask how often he will be taken outside to do his business. Ask how often he will be fed and provided water. Ask how he will be provided exercise and entertainment. Some kennels offer agility courses or even swimming for dogs while others offer a nice safe fenced in yard for running. Next, inquire as to the kennel's arrangements for veterinary care should your pet become sick during his stay. Finally, show up unannounced one day well before your vacation and inspect the kennel and meet the staff. Make sure the kennel is clean and that the dogs look well cared for. Also, make sure the staff is friendly and genuinely loving toward the dogs. While a kennel might be a fun vacation for your outgoing dog, it might not be the best choice for shy or nervous dogs.

### **Dog Sitters**

For dogs that prefer to be in their own homes and thrive in familiar environments, it might be best for your dog and your own state of mind to keep your dog at home while you are away. There are many pet sitting services available. You can hire someone to stay in your home while you are away and instruct that person to keep your dog's rules and routines the same as they when you are home. For example, if your dog like 5 walks a day at specific times, then your pet sitter should walk him at those times. Since this person will be living in your home and taking care of your beloved dog, a thorough background check and in depth interview are recommended. Also, make sure the pet sitter visits your home and interacts with your dog well before your trip so that you are confident that your dog is comfortable with the sitter.

## **Friends and Relatives**

If you have a friend or relative with whom your dog is comfortable and who is willing to take your dog into their home, then that might be a good option. You will be confident that your dog is loved and safe. You will also save a lot of money by avoiding kennel or pet sitter fees (although it is nice gesture to buy your friend or relative a gift from your trip).

So, consider these options and take your next vacation with the peace of mind that your dog is well taken care of and happy.

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