

Considerations When Boarding Your Dog

People face the decision of what to do with their dogs any time they travel. Does the hotel allow dogs? Is the neighbor's teenager responsible enough to medicate my geriatric dog? What if there is an emergency with my pet while I'm on the road? A boarding facility may be a better option than traveling with a pet or leaving it with a friend in some circumstances. There are a few things to keep in mind when choosing a boarding facility and a few preparations to make before leaving your dog in a kennel.

Interview and visit the boarding kennel before you make reservations. Make sure that the kennels are spacious and clean, that the animals have proper bedding and fresh water, and they receive the attention that your dog will require while you are away. Dogs are generally very adaptable to boarding if they receive appropriate care. Make your reservations well in advance of a planned trip. Boarding kennels may be booked six months or more in advance of a holiday.

Be sure to take all of the medications that your dog will need during boarding. Are the vials clearly labeled, and are there enough tablets for the duration of the stay? It is a good idea to write or type a short list that describes feeding and medicating instructions for the boarding kennel. Take a business card for your veterinarian and emergency clinic to give to the staff of the facility. If your dog has a serious condition such as heart failure or kidney failure, you may want to investigate a 24 hour animal hospital that provides boarding for fragile pets.

Ask the kennel whether or not you should provide your own bedding, toys, and bowls, or if they provide their own. It is nice to have something familiar to the dog with it in the kennel; however, in reality these items become soiled and end up in the laundry anyway. Dogs do not tend to play with their toys from home while in the kennel. Your personal belongings may become lost or damaged while boarding your dog.

It is very important, on the other hand, to provide the food that your dog is accustomed to eating. Diet change diarrhea is very common in boarding dogs. The stress of being in a different environment can add to the symptoms, causing a boarder to become quite ill. Do not pack a lot of treats for your dog, especially something you have never given before. And reduce the amount of food rations slightly during boarding. Overfeeding significantly contributes to boarding related colitis as well.

To reduce separation anxiety, you may want to board your dog on the day that you pack for the trip. Stuffing suitcases and packing activity can trigger emotional stress in susceptible dogs.