

What's Best For Your Dog When You Are Away?

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Many families plan on summer vacations this time of year. If your destination is not pet friendly or your pet is not a good traveler (most cats fit into this category) they must be left behind while you travel. Two options exist for making sure your dog or cat is well taken care including finding a pet sitter to watch your pet in your home or booking a stay at a boarding facility.

Most cats do very well when left in their normal environment. A pet sitter should be hired to provide fresh food and water to your kitty and to clean the litter pan regularly. Some dogs also do better staying home in their familiar setting especially if they develop stress induced diarrhea or have aggression toward other pets. In my case, with three dogs and two cats, it is financially more feasible to hire a pet sitter to come to my house than to pay boarding fees for five pets. I leave specific instructions on my pet's feeding schedule, medication routines, and emergency numbers for the pet sitter to have available.

Some dogs love socializing with other pets and see boarding facilities as their own resort to have fun at. You should ask for referrals to a boarding facility from your friends or veterinarian. I would advise meeting the staff at the facility and taking a tour to check the cleanliness and safety of the operation. Most places require your pet to be up to date on vaccines. Reservations

are also necessary at most facilities. When you drop your pet off, you may want to leave a blanket or t-shirt with your scent on it. Bring all of your pet's medication (in their original prescription bottles) and food (if allowed to) to avoid any gastrointestinal upset that can occur with changing diets. The main goal of your vacation is to relax. Making sure your pet is well cared for means one less worry to be concerned with.

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