

Quick Guide: Choosing a Pet Boarding Location

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You have selected the very best pup possible – and now you want to provide them with the best life! All pet parents need a place that they trust to care for their dog when they cannot. When selecting a pet care facility for your precious pup, it is important that you be able to answer some key questions to ensure that the facility is providing the safest, healthiest, and best experience possible for your doggo!

Key topics to consider when selecting a pet care facility include:

- 1 Communication
- 2 Disease Prevention
- 3 Behavior
- 4 Enrichment and Mental Stimulation

1. Communication

The pet care and support triangle consists of veterinarians, pet care facilities, and the pet parent. Next to you, pet care professionals at boarding sites, doggie day cares, and groomers spend the most time with your dog. It is crucial that these folks are professionally trained to care for your dog and provide consistent and accurate communication to you and to your veterinarian.

Questions to ask:

- How quickly will I be notified if something happens with my dog?
- Does the pet care facility have an established relationship with a veterinarian?
- Will they speak regularly with YOUR veterinarian and do they ask for your veterinarian's contact info on your pet's first visit?
- Are staff physically present overnight at the facility?
- Does the pet care facility have professionally trained staff? Are the staff all certified in pet CPR?

2. Disease Prevention

Dogs going to pet care facilities are at higher risk for disease than dogs that never see another dog and pet care facilities should take steps to radically decrease disease transmission among the dogs in their care through vaccine requirements and cleaning and disinfection protocols.

The number one way to stop disease transmission among dogs is vaccination. The minimum standard vaccine requirements by a pet care facility for dogs include:

- Distemper annually or every 3 years
- Parvo annually or every 3 years
- Hepatitis (Adenovirus) annually or every 3 years
- Parainfluenza (CPIV) and *Bordetella bronchiseptica* intranasally or orally every 6 months or annually
- Rabies annually or every 3 years
- Leptospirosis annually
- Canine influenza annually



A clean facility should have a neutral odor, the lobby and kennel areas should not have strong chemical odors that can irritate your dog and may even be toxic to them. A good facility will employ disinfectants that are proven effective against bacteria and viruses, including the naked viruses such as parvo.*

Questions to ask:

- What vaccines are required for dogs to enter the facility?
- Are mucosal vaccines against upper respiratory infections required?
- Is canine influenza vaccination required?
- What is the facility's cleaning and disinfection protocol?

3. Behavior

Nearly 40% of dogs might actually be introverts!* While play groups might be good for some dogs, they might also be miserable for your dog. A pet care facility should assess your dog individually and offer customized options based on your dog's temperament.

Questions to ask:

- What play groups are available?
- How is my dog evaluated for group activities?
- What happens if/when a dog displays aggressive behavior?
- How are dogs selected for groups?
- What independent play options are available for my dog?
- What happens if a dog gets stressed in a play group?

4. Enrichment and Mental Stimulation

Environmental or behavioral enrichment is the process of manipulating an animal's environment to increase physical activity and normal species typical behavior. It is important that a pet care facility have staff professionally trained in environmental and behavioral enrichment.

Questions to ask:

- What is your environmental enrichment program?
- Does the facility have different enrichment options?

Choosing to add a dog to your family is a big decision but choosing the place that will provide the best care for the pet that you love is an even bigger decision that will impact you and them significantly. From Frenchies to doodles to Lhasa apsos, just as your dog is unique, so is the care that they need. Now that you know what to look for and what questions to ask, you are prepared to make an informed decision about which pet care facility to add to your dog's care team. Choose wisely! For more info check out the complete Guide at www.Guidetochoosingapetboardingfacility.com



Important Questions For Your Boarding Facility

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Communication

- Does the pet care facility have an established relationship with a veterinarian?
- Will they speak regularly with YOUR veterinarian and you?
- Does the pet care facility have professionally trained staff? Are the staff all certified in pet CPR?

Disease Prevention

- What vaccines are required for dogs to enter the facility?
- Are mucosal vaccines against upper respiratory infections required?
- Is canine influenza vaccination required?
- Are parasticides required?
- What is the facility's cleaning and disinfection protocol?

Behavior

- How is my dog's temperament assessed?
- Is individual play an option?
- Are rest periods scheduled into daily activities?
- What is the staff to pet ratio? What about in play groups?

Enrichment and Mental Stimulation

- What is your environmental enrichment program?
- Does the facility have different enrichment options?
- Is a trainer on staff and is a training session an option?

