

# Walker Veterinary Hospital

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## BOARDING YOUR DOG

Many owners say that they will never leave their dog in boarding kennels. However, situations may occur in which you are unable to take your dog with you. During these times, you have the following options:

The dog stays at home and you arrange for a friend or relative to “dog sit” in your home while you are away.



You arrange for a friend or neighbor to care for your pet in their home. This works well when the dog knows the home and the people. However, there is always a risk that your dog may escape and get lost in an unfamiliar neighborhood.

You arrange for your dog to go to a boarding kennel. This is probably the safest option since well-designed kennels are safe and secure. Many boarding facilities are associated with veterinary hospitals and are staffed with trained professionals to care for your pet.

### ***Will my dog be happy in a boarding kennel?***

Many dogs are very happy when they stay in kennels and look forward to going. You should plan well in advance and make sure to visit the kennels beforehand to verify that the facility meets your expectations. Some kennels will recommend a series of short boarding visits lasting a few hours to allow your dog to become accustomed to being away from you.

### ***How will I know if my dog will relax in the kennel?***

Despite the fears of owners, most dogs settle into boarding life very quickly. It is always worthwhile to board your pet for a weekend or a few days to see how they do before your trip. One or two short stays at a kennel will help your pet adjust to being without you and get used to the boarding facility and staff. When you pick up your pet, evaluate their general condition. This will give you an indication of the standard of care your pet received. Be sure to ask the kennel staff about your pet's behavior and appetite. Many pets that are unaccustomed to boarding will have a decreased appetite during their stay. This is normal but frequent, short visits will help reduce your pet's anxieties.

### ***How will I find suitable boarding kennels?***

Most kennels advertise in the Yellow Pages and local telephone directories. Recommendations from friends or neighbors are often your best source of information.

***How will I locate kennels in an area where I am visiting?***

Follow the same procedure as above and also telephone local veterinary practices and enlist their help. Your veterinary clinic should be able to provide you with telephone numbers of local practices where you are visiting or moving.

***Are there any requirements necessary before boarding my pet?***

All pets that are boarded should be current on their vaccinations. Rabies, distemper and upper respiratory ("kennel cough") vaccines are universally required. Most boarding kennels will require written proof of vaccination and all applicable pet licenses prior to boarding your pet. Any special medical problems or dietary requirements should be fully discussed before boarding your pet at a kennel. Be sure to call and find out what is required prior to your visit to prevent last minute delays.

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*This client information sheet is based on material written by Ernest Ward, DVM.  
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