

# Finding a Pet Sitter so You Can Go on Vacation

July 27, 2009 by  
[Linda Cole](#)

## *Pet Sitting in Your Home Instead of Boarding Your Pet*

The bags are packed and airline tickets have been bought. Tomorrow begins that vacation you worked so hard all year for. Two weeks of sun and surf with no boss looking over your shoulder. No alarm clock and no punching the time clock. Then you see the dog in the backyard and realize you had forgotten to make arrangements for him. You need a pet sitter so you can go on vacation.

Hopefully, the task of finding a good pet sitter isn't done at the spur of the moment. You want to leave your pets in the hands of someone you trust while you are gone. It's also important to make sure the person you ask really wants to accept the responsibility of caring for your pets. It would be a shame to leave your buddy in the hands of someone who half heartily agreed to run over to throw some food in the dog's dish and then rush back home to catch a baseball game on TV.

There are four options available to pet owners when they need some time away from home. You can board your pets, take them with you, hire someone to come into your home or ask a friend or family member to care for them. The option of taking pets with you are not always feasible. Boarding them at your vet's office or a kennel can leave your pet unhappy and depressed and could be costly. More people are opting to hire a pet sitter or ask a friend to come in and care for their pets. Either one is the better choice for your pets and security of your home as long as you choose wisely.

So what qualities do you look for in a pet sitter? A service usually provides care for your pet that includes attention, exercise, grooming, giving any medications and knowing when and if your pet needs veterinarian care. They will also take in your mail and newspapers and water your plants. Giving your home the impression of someone being at home.

If you have to hire a service that you've never used before or you do not know the employee who may be watching your pet, be sure to ask for references and referrals. Check out each reference and referral given. A pet sitting business should be able to provide you with proof of liability

insurance and bonding to help protect you from theft or damaged property caused by an employee of the sitting service. Even though we'd like to believe those who are being paid to watch our pets and homes are honest and trustworthy, occasionally someone may slip in who may be of questionable character. It's best to check ahead of time then return home to an unhappy, hungry pet and a ransacked home.

Depending on where you live, a pet sitting service may not exist. If that's the case and you have to rely on family or friends to step in, don't be afraid to ask questions of anyone you aren't paying to watch your pets. Make sure they are willing to commit to as normal a routine as your pet is use to. From daily walkings and any medications that may be needed to quality attention and back scratching time. You don't want someone to simply run in, plop down some food and then run out just as fast. You may be gone, but your pet still needs and wants someone to share a bit of their time with them. A pet sitter should also be knowledgeable enough to know if your pet needs vet care.

Before leaving on your trip, ask your pet sitter to stop over so you can introduce them to your pets. Observe how they interact with your pet especially if it's a dog. Explain walking schedules, eating habits and medications, if any, that need to be given. Be sure to leave [phone](#) numbers where you can be reached in case of an [emergency](#) and the [phone](#) number of your veterinarian.

Your pet doesn't have to feel left out just because he is left home alone while you're visiting the sites of the Grand Canyon. A good pet sitter can keep your pet happy and healthy and provide that "someone's at home" look to help ward off burglars looking for houses left alone while their owners are on vacation. Enjoy your vacation by making sure your pet is well cared for while you're away. They will thank you for it later.

[Choosing a Pet Sitter](#), the Humane Society of the United States

[Dog sitter/pet sitter](#), Doggeek.com

[How to Start a Pet Sitting/Dog Walking Business](#), Professional United Pet Sitters LLC,