

10 TIPS WHEN BOARDING YOUR PET

1. **Keep their diets the same:** Many boarding facilities will offer food as part of your pet's stay. However, changing up your pet's diet can suddenly wreak havoc on her digestive system. In addition to the nerves she is already feeling by being in a new place, surrounded by strange roommates (and noises!), changing her diet can equal disaster. Consider bringing your pet's own food with specific directions for the kennel regarding how much to administer and what time of day.
2. **Bring your pet's medical records:** Make sure to bring copies of his medical records. Most boarding facilities require certain vaccinations in order to board and without proof, won't let your pet stay. Additionally, giving the staff an idea of any recent medical issues will allow them to provide better care. If your pet is on any medication, don't forget to pack it with dosing instructions.
3. **Check out the facility first (or better yet, do a test run):** If this is your first time boarding your pet (or first time at this particular facility), make sure you check it out thoroughly before dropping him off. Some facilities have different sizes of kennels/catteries which are best gauged in person. Many facilities will also offer separate spaces for cats, away from barking dogs. If you can, do a test run for one night to see how your pet does in a new environment. It's important to check out the facility as much as possible so you can make the best decision possible regarding your pet's care.
4. **Ask about optional services to make your pets stay more fun...** Some boarding facilities will offer additional play time or walks to make your his stay more fun. It's also becoming more common to find facilities with group play areas and/or "swimming pools" for dogs who love water. With pet activity trackers becoming more popular, you can even monitor your pet's activity level while you're away to ensure that he is still exercising and staying active. Incorporating activities into your pet's stay will not only keep him active while you're away, but can also help the time go by faster!
5. **...or less stressful:** Offering calming supplements to anxious pets who have a hard time being away from home can help your pet through what can be a challenging. Ask us for more information about these types of supplemental options if you feel your pet could benefit.
6. **Bring some small comforts from home:** Bringing your dog's bed, toys and treats, can help reinforce the feelings of being at home and help make her stay more pleasant. The same goes for cats – ask if the facility will allow you to bring your cat's litter box, especially if your cat is picky (which most cats are!) Having things with them that smell like or remind them of home is a great way to keep them more relaxed.
7. **Book early and check their hours:** If you find a facility that you are comfortable with, make sure you book your pet's stay early and confirm as your trip gets closer. Many boarding facilities get booked up, particularly during the holiday season and summer. Knowing their open/closed hours is also important – are they open on Sundays? If not, and that's the day you return, you might have to pay for an extra night.
8. **Ask about their emergency policy:** If something happens to your pet during their stay, what is the emergency plan? Where do they take animals who become sick or injured, and how do they determine your comfort level regarding your pet's care? It's information you will hopefully not have to use, but if you do, are better off knowing in advance.
9. **Make sure your pet is outfitted with updated identification:** In the rare event that she does require professional care or is able to get free, make sure she has an updated collar with ID tags and contact information. Additionally, micro-chipping your pet can help drastically speed up the relocation process.
10. **Check referrals and talk to us first:** It's always a good idea to check a facility's referrals before booking. This can help you make the best decision for your pet.