

## I am going on holidays. How do I choose a kennel for my dog?

ANSWER: (from Canine Behavioural School and CLEAR Dog Training)



It is often hard to leave your dog somewhere strange and go off and enjoy your holiday. When choosing a kennel in which you think your dog will be happy, ensure you ask the right questions and be VERY sure that you check out the kennel well before it is time for your holiday. At busy holiday times kennels fill fast and you want to ensure that you are not left take a “last resort” kennel instead of a “pet resort” kennel for your dog. Dogs have sometimes come back from some kennels in a very poor physical and mental condition. You want a dog who will come back

from his “holiday” equally positive, happy and healthy.

### Where to look for a kennel:

- Friends – word of mouth referral from happy owners is the best!
- Your local vet who will hopefully be aware of good ones in your area
- Dog training schools and clubs – we get asked about kennels all the time
- Pet shops – be careful that they aren’t getting kick backs from disreputable kennels
- Yellow pages – this is a last resort and make very sure you visit the kennel before committing to placing your dog there.

### First impressions when you ring

- Are they friendly? If not, go elsewhere.
- Will they talk to you about your concerns? If not, go elsewhere.
- Do they happily answer all your questions/ If not, go elsewhere.

### When you visit [always do so as a place can sound better than it actually is!] look for:

- Happy healthy dogs
- Clean fresh water
- Clean runs
- Professional friendly staff

### Questions to ask about exercise and play time

- Are the dogs exercised daily, if so for how long?
- Where are they exercised? How large is the exercise area?
- Is it concrete or grass?
- Are dogs exercised singly, in pairs or in appropriate social groups?
- Do they provide a variety of dog toys? What sort?

### Questions to ask about food

- What is fed and when is it fed?
- Do they leave food out if it is not eaten immediately?
- What do they do if, due to a change of environment, a dog won't eat?
- Do they weigh their dogs regularly to make sure that a good weight is maintained?

### Questions to ask about accommodation

- How many dogs does the kennel look after at its maximum capacity?
- Do dogs share accommodation? If so, on what basis are roommates selected?
- Is there an indoor and outdoor section to the run? How large is the run area?
- Is the indoor section protected from the weather?
- Is bedding provided? Is bedding off the ground?
- How are the kennels cleaned? Do they hose down while the dog is still in the kennel?
- Is the kennel air conditioned
- If not, how do they help the animals in extreme temperatures?

### Questions to ask about the kennels pre-requisites

- Are all dogs vaccinated and certificates shown before entry?
- Are all dogs on a flea treatment that kills fleas on contact?
- Are all dogs on all wormer for whip, hook, round and tapeworm?
- Do they ask for other relevant information about your pet (e.g. afraid of thunderstorms)?
- What specialist care do they offer for elderly dogs, timid or frightened pets, and dogs suffering from separation anxiety, overweight dogs?
- What do they do if your dog gets sick?
- Does the kennel have a vet on call?
- Is the kennel registered with any pet industry governing body?
- Does any of the kennel staff have animal behaviour qualifications?
- How long has the kennel been in operation under the same ownership?



You must feel as comfortable as possible that your dog is being left in good hands. You need to be happy that any questions you ask are answered to your satisfaction. A kennel holiday for your dog may not always be what he wants but you can make it better for your dog if you ensure that professional, trained personnel will be caring for your dog.