



## ***What You Should Know Before Hiring a Dog Walker/Pet Sitter***

*First, consider your furry friend's needs.*

*Your pets are important to you. So if you're going to trust them to a stranger while you're away, you should have the right questions ready to ensure the safety and happiness of your pets.*

*Just as some people are "dog people" and others are "cat" people, there's no "one size fits all" when it comes to finding the right Dog Walker/Pet Sitter to meet the specific needs of you and your furry friend.*

*The Dog Walker/Pet Sitter industry has grown in recent years. This has provided pet owners like us with many options for choosing a professional Dog Walker/Pet Sitter, whether you are looking for cat care, dog sitting, dog walking or anything else in the way of in-home pet-care services.*

*With more Dog Walker/Pet Sitter options and numerous online pet-sitter directories, you will need to be more prudent in your search for reliable pet care. Practice due diligence. Ensure that you are using the services of a true professional Dog Walker/Pet Sitter. This person will be coming into your home and you want someone you can trust. After all, they will be caring for the furry members of your family. If you don't have clear expectations of what you want in a Dog Walker/Pet Sitter, it's likely you will be disappointed. Follow these tips to find, hire and keep the perfect Dog Walker/Pet Sitter.*

*Finding a Dog Walker/Pet Sitter to provide the right pet-care services requires an investment of time.*

### ***Here are 5 tips for hiring the perfect Dog Walker/Pet Sitter:***

- 1. Plan Ahead.*** Not sure where to start? First ask friends and family if they have someone they love and trust. If not, try using websites like [www.theluckypup.com](http://www.theluckypup.com). Not all Dog Walker/Pet Sitters are Licensed, Insured, Bonded and Pet First Aid/CPR certified. Also think about the time of year, chances are your desired time will fall during the most popular times of the month or year that everyone else will need a Dog Walker/Pet Sitter. Don't wait until the last-minute and expect to find a great Dog Walker/Pet Sitter. All the good ones may be booked up.
- 2. Set up Interviews.*** Once you have a list of Dog Walker/Pet Sitters that service your area call a few to check services, availability and pricing. Make sure to discuss what kinds of animals you have. Not all Dog Walker/Pet Sitters care for all kinds of pets. Some are limited to cats and dogs. We recommend setting up at least 2-3 interviews with potential Dog Walker/Pet Sitters. This way you will be able to see how people interact with your pets and vice versa. Animals are a great judge of character and they can help you make the final decision. Keep in mind that the cheapest person/service is not always the best choice. You will find after making a few calls that most Dog Walker/Pet Sitters will have similar prices. If someone is charging significantly less, there might be a reason.
- 3. Be Upfront.*** If you have pets with behavior or medical issues make sure to discuss these types of things at

instance, not everyone is comfortable giving insulin or other injections or medications. On the behavioral side you might have a 150 lb. dog that pulls on a leash. Is the potential Dog Walker physically capable of walking him or her?

**4. Ask Questions.** This is the step most people get hung up on and yet it's the most important one. Be sure to ask the right questions and never feel bad about asking too many questions. Reputable Dog Walker/Pet Sitters won't mind at all and will be happy to sit and chat and get to know you and your needs.

- Does the Dog Walker/Pet Sitter have a business license and are they bonded, insured and Pet First Aid/CPR certified?
- What other certifications do they have, if any?
- Do they have an emergency backup person in case they are ill or injured?
- Do they have a contract?
- Do they check the mail, administer medications if necessary and water plants, etc.?

Be wary of a person that dodges questions that you ask, and/or does not ask you questions and seem genuinely interested in providing the best possible care for your pet(s) and home during your absence.

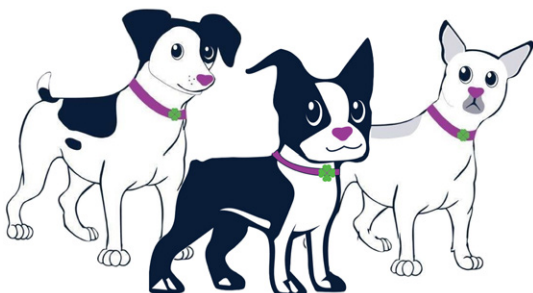
**5. Make Final Arrangements.** Once you have decided on a Dog Walker/Pet Sitter make sure to go over contracts, exchange keys, give payment and explain your exact needs. A good idea is to put together a folder with your pet's shot records and other important information that the Dog Walker/Pet sitter can take to the vet in case of an emergency; and make sure you have written a release letter and/or notified your vet before your time away in case your Sitter does need to take Fluffy to the vet for any reason. If you already have vacation or time away booked, give them to your new Dog Walker/Pet Sitter ASAP. Feel free to leave extra notes or send texts for things that you may have forgotten until your Dog Walker/Pet Sitter gets comfortable with your pet's routine.

**Final thought.** When you finally decided on the Dog Walker/Pet Sitter that best fits your needs, also ask yourself these questions: Are they courteous and friendly? If you left a message, how soon was it returned? Do they guarantee you and your pets' satisfaction?

In the end, make sure you feel safe and comfortable with the Walker/Sitter you choose entering your home so that you can spend your time away with piece of mind and no worries of the family members that had to stay home. Once you return, ask yourself: How was your overall experience? Did they show up on time and perform up to your standards? Would you recommend them to a friend or family member? And most importantly, What are my next dates that I need to secure with The Lucky Pup so that Fido and Fluffy have another great experience?

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 Mention this article by name and get 50% off your first visit with The Lucky Pup.\*



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