



Animal care offering you and your pet peace of mind...

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## All About Pet Sitters

Pet sitters do so much more than just feed, walk and exercise your pets while you are away from home. A solid professional pet sitter will spend quality time with your pets and be able to tell if your pet(s) need veterinary attention.

Many pet sitters offer FREE additional services, i.e. Watering plants, taking in mail and papers and alternating lights and blinds. These services provide a safe measure, having a lived-in look for your home.

Many people will call themselves PET SITTERS, but that does not mean they are qualified to handle the job. The following information will help you find the best pet sitter for you and your pet(s).

### ***Why should you hire a pet sitter?***

When you are away from home on pleasurable vacation or traveling for work, who will take care of your furry, feathered and finned family members?

Some pet(s) are not able to switch environments and go to boarding facilities or dog daycare. Reasons include, age, socialization issues, intact animals, and those who have severe stress or anxiety when away from their home.

Like many pet owners, asking a neighbor or friend to stop by is common practice.

Is a quick visit from a neighbor the best for your pet(s)? Few have neighbors with extensive knowledge of pet care and these friends may not make the "drop by" visits a priority. Resentment if the neighbor or friend is inconvenienced may also occur.

Your next step is to find a pet sitter and consider hiring a professional qualified individual, paid to care for your pet(s).

### ***What do Pet Sitters Offer?***

There are many benefits to hiring a professional pet sitter.

Your pet(s):

- Will be in familiar surroundings
- Will have the exact same diet and routine
- Will have relief from traveling to and staying in an unfamiliar place with other animals who may be experiencing their own stress
- Will have plenty of individual attention while you are away
- Will have no chance of being exposed to any illness and they maintain a calm energy level keeping their immune system happy and healthy

You will receive:

- Happy neighbors and friends who no longer are burdened with caring for your pet(s)
- The peace of mind that your pet(s) are being cared for by a professional
- Having your home appear "busy" and lived-in
- The pleasure of not having to drive to drop off and pick up your pet(s) from a boarding facility
- Having your plants watered, packages, mail and newspapers taken in

- No risk of having your pets exposed to illness which could lead to additional costs at the veterinarian

### **What should you look for when hiring a pet sitter?**

Having a pet sitter in your home is a very personal service. Make sure you have a phone interview with your potential sitter prior to scheduling a face to face consultation. Make sure his/her qualifications and services match your expectations. It is important that you feel comfortable every step of the way in the hiring process.

### ***How soon was your call returned after leaving a sitter a message?***

All calls should be returned within 24 hours

### ***Does your pet sitter have an occupational license, insurance and bond policies?***

This is of the utmost importance for you, your pet and your home. Professional Pet Sitters should be able to provide copies upon request. Pet Sitters with staff should have policies which extend to cover those working for their company.

### ***How much notice does the sitter need for coverage?***

Some sitters have additional fees for last minute requests. Be sure to decipher if that is the case prior to agreeing to services.

### ***How much experience does your pet sitter have in a professional capacity? Have they been trained by veterinarians, shelter staff or through a formal education programs? How long have they been caring and working with animals?***

Very important questions. Your sitter should have a history of working with animals in a formal capacity. He/she should be trained on how to identify abnormalities in your pet(s) eating habits, behavior and physical appearance.

If you should have exotic pets, birds, pot bellied pigs, saltwater tanks and/or special needs cats and dogs, be sure you feel your pet sitter is confident in their abilities to care for those types of pets.

### ***Does your pet sitter have professional forms, contract and references?***

Forms that are provided at the time of the initial consultation will detail the services provided along with pricing. The expectations of the sitter and client should be written clearly. References should be available at this time as well.

### ***Does your pet sitter have a contingency plan in the event of illness, disaster or inclement weather?***

Professional pet sitters should have back up sitters (screened, trained and prepared to care for your pet(s)), if your sitter, for an extreme reason, is unable to get to your pet(s). A disaster plan should be discussed at the time of your initial visit to protect your pet(s) in the event of a man made or natural disaster.

### ***Did your pet sitter have a positive attitude and comfortable means of interacting with your pet(s) during your initial consultation?***

It is important that your initial face to face consultation is full of positive energy and your pet(s) react well to the sitter. Your sitter should be confident, professional and exemplify the knowledge and expertise required to provide you and your pet(s) the highest quality of care.

### ***Does your sitter have payment terms?***

The terms of payment should be clearly written in the documentation he/she provides you at the time of your consultation. Some sitters require a deposit while others expect payment once services are rendered. There is no industry standard for payment terms. Make sure everyone is clear how payment shall be received prior to leaving the consultation.

When hiring a sitter for professional services, this information is critical to ensuring a comfortable arrangement for you, your pet(s) and the pet sitter. In your absence you can have peace of mind that your beloved pet(s) are in an expert's hands.