



Good candidates for day care are well socialized dogs who enjoy other dogs and seek interaction with them at every opportunity.

Young dogs often adjust to the day care environment better than the older ones. If your dog is a regular at the dog park and plays happily there, then day care is probably ideal for your pet.



However, some dogs are not good candidates for day care and do better at home alone. If your dog is fearful, aggressive tense or anxious, or if your older dog is happier at home alone then day care is probably not a good choice. Other unsuitable candidates for dog day care include females in heat, unneutered males, and unvaccinated puppies. Hiring a dog walker, asking friends or neighbors to visit your dog in the middle of the day, coming home at lunch, or using a dog boarding facility may be better options for you.

Questions to ask a Day Care Facility

- Does the facility have large open areas for the dogs and the ability to group like-sized dogs in separate areas?
- Does the facility look and smell clean?
- Is the flooring in all play areas wall-to-wall, easy to clean, non-porous and not slick?
- Is there ample shade and water available throughout the facility?
- Do the other dogs look happy and healthy?
- Do the dogs have safe, adequate toys and equipment available? Toys and objects in the play areas can be problematic for dogs which display "possessive aggression," so it is best if toys are controlled and playtimes with toys are well supervised.
- Are the indoor and outdoor areas of the facility safe and secure? Make sure that dogs do not have access to doors leading out of the play areas. Outdoor areas should be securely fenced.
- Does the facility have an evacuation plan in place in case of fire or natural disaster?
- What is the procedure if a dog is injured or becomes ill during the day?



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Is Day Care Right for Your Dog?



DOG DAY
AFTERNOON

Benefits of Day Care

Dog day care provides many benefits, including much needed exercise and socialization for your pet. Dogs exposed to multiple environments and many social situations tend to handle new situations more confidently.

THE RIGHT DAY CARE FACILITY CAN:

1. Increase the dog's ability to interact positively with other dogs & people
2. Work the dog's mind & muscles
3. Enhance the dog's overall wellbeing
4. Prevent behavior issues
5. Prevent dog weight problems



As your dog's caregiver, you may even feel less guilty because you aren't leaving your dog home alone so often.



Older dogs need more rest than active younger dogs and are at risk of being knocked over and/or being injured. Pick a day care that has provisions for such needs. While most seniors would probably prefer to stay home, a day care could be beneficial if there is separation anxiety or medical concerns that need to be watched.

Puppies benefit from the proper social environment tremendously. Early socialization is very important for all breeds. You want to make sure the day care you choose has the ability to monitor puppy play and provide adequate rest when needed. An overtired pup can develop undesirable behaviors.



Not all dogs are successful in day care. This includes adult dogs with little to no previous socialization. A day care **is not** the place to **train** your dog to become socialized.

Bully breeds and Terriers are most successful in day care when they attend only a couple days a week because they may become exhausted, and overstimulated and reactive

Herding dogs do best in day care that provides small play groups for them.

Small dogs and big dogs can play together just fine at home, but when a mixed group plays together, the smaller dogs are at risk of being stepped on or snapped at, causing unintentional injuries.

What to look for in a day care facility...

The Staff



The facility should have adequate staff so dogs are not left unattended. The staff should be well-trained so they understand canine body language; it is essential that they can discern whether the dogs are playing or bullying and understand how play styles vary by different breeds. Other concerns include how they discipline dogs, what is done to prevent and end dog fights, and what they do in case of an emergency. Make sure you are comfortable with the staff at the day care you choose and that they are comfortable with your dog.

The Rules

Once you have assured yourself the facility has policies and procedures in place to keep your dog safe and happy, the next step is to familiarize yourself with their rules of engagement. Most facilities will not accept puppies that have not had at least two rounds of vaccinations. Vaccination for Bordetella is also required by most day care facilities. The majority of dog day care facilities require dogs to be spayed or neutered. Proof of routine deworming may be requested. Some facilities will recommend monthly treatment for the prevention of fleas. Also, remember to ask about any special needs your dog may require during his or her stay at the day care facility.

