

What You Should Know When Deciding Between a Dog Walker & Day Care Facility.....

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- In regards to training, most reputable trainers will say that a day care facility is not an ideal option when you are practicing obedience training with your dog. Since most facilities have a poor staff-to-dog ratio, correcting bad behavior is not on the top of the list. These facilities can reinforce undesirable behavior in your dog. In addition, at a facility your dog can pick up bad habits from other dogs such as barking, soiling indoors, and overbearing issues.
- The chances of your dog becoming injured are far less with a dog walker. During a dog walk, the dog is on a leash, and closely monitored. In a day care facility, the dogs are off-leash and things can get out of hand real fast because again of the poor staff-to-dog ratio. Accidents can happen easier in this type of situation even with the most well-meaning people, and sometimes these accidents can have lasting negative affects on your pup.
- Day care facilities are not ideal when housebreaking your dog. In fact your dog will often continue to eliminate indoors while at a facility. Dogs are best housebroken in their own homes with consistent, realistically spaced out walks that are appropriate for life stage.
- The likelihood of your dog getting sick increases drastically at a day care facility. In addition, most facilities do not insure the dogs while they are in their care; so if your dog gets sick or hurt at the facility, you are paying the bill. With most dog walking companies, the dogs are insured, and the company will cover your expenses. But of course, make sure you ask about their insurance!
- Dog walking is also more appropriate for addressing separation anxiety. It is best to deal with these issues by teaching and then supporting your dog to be at east at home by himself. If needed, a trainer or behaviorist can help. There are many methods for supporting your dog through separation anxiety; however, sending your dog away to day care will not address this use, just mask it.
- If you are looking to further socialize your dog, dogs love to walk in packs, which can be accomplished with a reputable dog walking company. For safety purposes, the company should not walk more than 2-3 dogs at once, and this way your dog gets personalized attention and training.
- Regarding your dog, there are 2 types of exercise: physical and mental. Some dogs at day care facilities do not get enough of either, or both! With a dog walker, you know your dog is walking (or running!) while he is out. As for mental exercise, on a leashed walk, your dog is getting the mental stimulation that he needs i.e. leash training whereas the walker is making sure your dog is walking behind or beside him for the duration of the walk. In addition, your walker can reinforce other commands your dog is learning, such as leave it, wait, stay, heal etc. At day care facilities, this one-on-one walking and attention doesn't exist.
- Some facilities provide limited access to their clients. This is two-fold. Some facilities prohibit dog owners from visiting their pet at any time, with or without advance notice. And some prohibit you to tour the entire facility and observe play before signing up your dog. The other side of this is that some facilities "close" during part of the day, and at night, so you are not allowed access to pick up your dog at these times. Also, some facilities, are closed for holidays, meaning if you come home on that day and want to pick up your dog, you cannot, and have to wait for the next day, and pay for your dog to stay there that night.