

## Choosing a Doggie Daycare

The primary objectives for any doggie day care you consider should be socialization and exercise for your animal. Dogs are pack animals and while you are the leader of your pack, it is not physically possible for a human to play and exercise a dog as extensively as another canine. Your dog should be pleasantly exhausted at the end of a play day; there will be much less destructive behavior if the dog's energy has a proper and safe outlet.

[www.hssv.org](http://www.hssv.org)

The following items are taken from a survey culled from actual clients who have listed their criteria (in no particular order) in considering one particular day care over another.

### PHYSICAL LOGISTICS

- What is the general layout of the facility? Indoor/Outdoor?
- How clean is the facility?
- Can you observe all the areas in which your dog will be playing?
- What are the safety barriers to prevent accidental escapes?
- How large is the area in which the dogs will play; are there selected areas for animals of varying size, and for "time-outs" or naptime?
- On what sort of surface will the dogs play? Is there "give" or cushion to the surface?
- Does the DDC have a city permit to operate an animal facility?
- Is there a separate potty area, and if so, how often is it cleaned?
- What sorts of toys are provided, and how often are they cleaned?
- Does the facility have climate control?
- What are the hours of the facility?
- Are you charged a daily or hourly rate?
- Is there a late pick-up charge?
- Are reservations required for the DDC?
- What are the rules for picking up and dropping off your dogs?
- Is training offered as part of the day care?
- Are the dogs supervised 100% of the time by experienced personnel?
- What is the facility's policies on animals injured at the day care facility?

### COMFORT FEATURES

- What steps, if any, are taken to prevent barking? (Nuisance barking is probably the #1 complaint about dogs.)
- What are the criteria for allowing an animal to participate in the DDC? (i.e. temperaments tests, proof of up-to-date vaccinations, flea/tick control)
- Are unaltered animals allowed in the DDC?
- How is fresh water provided?
- How many employees are at the DDC? It is not possible for a large staff to get to know your dog and its habits, and vice versa.
- How closely are the dogs monitored?
- Is there an odor when you walk in? (Doggie smells are ok but not other odors)

### HUMAN EMOTIONS

Is the facility truly functional for the dogs, or it is more geared to be "eye candy" for the owners? Canine needs and human needs differ. Much marketing is aimed towards what we think the humans will respond to, rather than what the dog really requires.

What is the ratio of human interaction to dog interaction your animal will experience during the day? There should be no more than 1 human to 15 dogs at any time!

Dogs are wonderful, loyal members of our families. Please choose a doggie day care with the same thoughtfulness you would use in selecting a babysitter or school for your children.