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## **Ruffin It's Doggy Daycare Guide**

For many busy and working pet parents, doggy daycare can be a lifesaver. You can go to work knowing your dog is safe and sound, getting the exercise they need, and having the time of their life.

But daycare isn't right for every pup, and finding a daycare you can trust with your fur baby's well-being isn't easy. That's why we've compiled this guide on everything you need to know about choosing the right doggy daycare. We believe that this information will be helpful, and hopefully, encourage you to trust Ruffin It with the care of your fur-baby!

### **WHY SHOULD I SEND MY DOG TO DAYCARE?**

There are plenty of reasons why you should send your dog to daycare (besides the fact that you can't be in two places at once). In addition to giving your dog the exercise they need; daycare offers other valuable benefits:

- **Socialization:** Daycare offers lots of opportunities for socialization, something that's crucial for dogs' well-being and development. If your dog doesn't socialize with other dogs early on, they can become antisocial and even aggressive towards other dogs. After all, dogs are social animals, and they enjoy (and even crave!) contact with other dogs — and they'll get plenty of that at doggy daycare.
- **Learning Social Cues:** Not only does attending daycare help your dog get used to being around different dogs, but it can also help them learn how to understand other dogs. As dog trainer Fernando Camacho explains, "If dogs don't get the proper exposure to other dogs, they have a hard time reading them and get into more conflicts. It's almost like they never learned the canine language." At

daycare, they can learn to pick up on social cues, something that can help them avoid trouble down the line.

As valuable as the benefits of attending daycare are, doggy daycare isn't a one-size-fits-all solution, and not all daycares are cut from the same cloth.



## **HOW SHOULD I CHOOSE A DAYCARE FOR MY DOG?**

Before your dog can attend daycare, they'll likely have to undergo an evaluation to see how well they play well with others and to ensure they won't pose a threat to the safety of the other dogs, and our staff. But even before the daycare conducts their evaluation, you should conduct yours.

## **WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A DOGGY DAYCARE**

After you've asked around and found some options, you should visit potential daycares to evaluate the facilities. The right daycare will check every box:

- It doesn't smell (If it smells bad, so will your dog. Plus, that shows poor cleaning methods.)
- There's no poop or pee in the play areas

- Plenty of space to play
- A fenced-in outdoor area where dogs can hang out
- Dogs are separated by size
- Constant supervision (dogs should never be alone!)
- A dog-to-person ratio you're comfortable with
- A well-trained, caring, and compassionate staff
- Meals and medication can be administered
- A timeout area where they can go when they need to relax or eat lunch

FYI...Ruffin It checks all these boxes!

You might have a separate list of “nice-to-haves” that aren’t dealbreakers, but can definitely give a potential daycare bonus points. Amenities you might want for your dog could be:

- Add-ons like bathing, grooming, and training services
- Options for boarding

Again, Ruffin It provides these additional services!

## **IS DOGGY DAYCARE RIGHT FOR MY DOG?**

Doggy daycare isn’t the right fit for every pup. In general, doggy daycare is a great fit for:

- Dogs that are outgoing and playful
- High-energy dog breeds that need more exercise than other dogs might (AKA more exercise than humanly possible)
- Working dogs and adolescent dogs that need something constructive to do to keep them out of trouble
- Puppies. The socialization puppies undergo at daycare is invaluable. Plus, it’s a great way to wear them out and prevent them from destroying your home.

On the other hand, doggy daycare may not be right for your dog if they:

- Aren't playful
- Aren't well-socialized
- Are scared of or anxious around other dogs
- Don't like or get along well with other dogs
- Are prone to "fear aggression"
- Aren't comfortable in big groups

### **What to expect from your dog's first day of doggy daycare**

Daycare is a fast-paced place, and your dog is sure to come home worn out, thirsty, and sore. Your puppy may even have scratches or paw injuries from a fun-filled day of playing and running. Your pet may also be a little dirty or wet at pick-up time, especially if the pups engage in outdoor recreation.

Expect your dog to sleep, eat, and drink a lot when they return home. Depending on your dog's age and personality, your pup may not show any signs of fatigue at all and come to the door still bouncing with excitement.

Your dog shouldn't appear fearful or frightened at pick-up time. If your dog still seems overwhelmed after a few days of doggy daycare, this form of pet care might not be the best fit for your pooch.

It's also important to mention that dogs at daycare can pass the occasional stomach bug or cold to their fellow daycare-goers. A good daycare will do its best to sanitize and monitor pets for symptoms of illness, but germ spread is bound to happen from time to time — so don't be surprised if Trixie comes home with the sniffles occasionally.

### **Tips for preparing for daycare**

Preparing your dog for daycare isn't as simple as filling out an application and dropping them off. There are a few things you'll need to do to ensure your dog is physically and mentally ready for daycare.

#### **1. Socialize your dog**

Before submitting your daycare application, your dog should be adequately socialized with humans and dogs. Your dog may do great with your family and pets, but they'll need exposure to strangers and unfamiliar dogs too. Putting an under socialized dog into doggy daycare never goes well and can cause unnecessary stress on your dog

and others. Take your pup to dog parks and invite pets over for playdates to ensure your dog is ready for daycare.

## 2. Make sure your pup is up to date on their shots

Before enrolling in most doggy daycares, your woofers will need their core vaccines and a kennel cough vaccine. While vaccines won't guarantee your dog won't get sick in daycare, they can prevent the spread of some of the more dangerous canine contagions.

## 3. Put your dog on flea and tick meds

For the safety of your dog and others, make sure your dog is on an effective flea and tick medication before their first day.

## 4. Make time for a potty break before drop-off

When the big day arrives, be sure you give your dog a chance to potty before they go in. Not only will this reduce the risk of accidents (and make things easier on staff), but it can make Fido more comfortable during introductions.

## 5. Don't forget the puppy chow

Be sure to bring pre-portioned meals for Fido on their first day. We provide food for an additional fee, but there's no telling how your dog's tummy will react to different food. Oftentimes it's best to just feed your dog prior to drop off.

## 6. Arrive early

Try to arrive early on your dog's first day, preferably before the rest of the dogs get here. Early arrival will ensure your dog doesn't get frightened by a swarm of excited dogs who are eager to introduce themselves.