

Our Guide to Boarding Your Pet—From Drop-off to Pick up

1. Make your reservations early: Unless you're boarding as a result of a family emergency, it's best to make your reservation as soon as possible. Many kennels are booked up on holidays and popular vacation times (spring break, labor day, etc.). While making your reservations, verify that your wellness is current. Wellness patients get priority booking and discounts, so ensuring your Wellness is current could help you budget. If your pet is not a wellness patient, verify that we have access to a print out of their vaccination record. Rabies and Tracheobronchitis vaccinations are required for staying in the kennel.

2. Pack for your pet's stay: *Bring all medications and syringes.* Make sure that medications are in their original container (not a pill counter) and are appropriately labeled. If your medication is from another pharmacy, make sure that there is enough medication in case you are delayed in returning. If you do not use HVC for medical services, please make sure that you are authorized to obtain refills by your attending veterinarian in case your return is delayed. Otherwise, you need to authorize us to conduct whatever monitoring tests your attending veterinarian deems necessary for re-authorization of your prescription. ***Bring all prescription diets.*** The diet we serve in our kennel is Science Diet for adult cats and dogs. We are happy to open a new bag or cans of prescription diets to purchase on your behalf and send home the remainder with your pet. ***Bring any growth, holistic or organic foods.*** Different pet owners have different opinions regarding their pet's nutritional needs. We're happy to serve any holistic or organic foods. Please bring these special diets in a labeled, airtight container, with feeding instructions for our kennel staff. ***Bring any special consumable treats.*** We're happy to give your dog or cat greenies from our shelf at your request, or any other consumable treat that you desire. Only bring the amount of treats you think prudent to use during your pet's stay with instructions. ***Bring any unique training or accessibility tools.*** Wheelchairs, elevated feeders, or specialized harnesses due to spinal or mobility issues are welcome, please supply these items because they are fitted specifically for your individual pet. ***Bring immunization records if your pet's physician is with another facility. We require Rabies vaccinations to be current (1 and 3 years according to your vet) and Tracheobronchitis is current only if given every 6 months according to the AVMA.***

3. Do not pack: *Non-consumable toys or bedding.* We have those things here! :D And we can ensure proper hospital sanitation methods are followed without damage to your household items. They are safer, and healthier while your pet is away from home. Furthermore, home-associated property often produces mild, unnecessary anxiety in a pet because s/he assigns him/herself the "job" of protecting those items. After decades of experience, we often find shirts and blankets that "smell like home" end up stuffed in a corner and urine marked on a daily basis. And finally, due to miscommunication present during travel in most households, (i.e. the leash was said to have been left at the clinic but is actually still at home or misplaced en-route) we cannot be responsible for any lost articles during your pet's stay. *Leashes, Choke Collars, Harnesses.* HVC's safety policies require that we use our own leashes for walking and storage. *Non-Prescription/Non-holistic Diets.*

4. Prepare your pet for boarding: Prepare your pet for a new environment with a guaranteed anti-parasitic, just to be on the safe side. All pets are examined for external parasites within the first 24 hours of their stay, and will be treated if external parasites are found during their stay. Remember that pets, like people, usually appreciate a new experiences and stimuli. What better way to provide this enrichment than a vacation in new surroundings with new friends. Once a dog becomes adjusted to the newness of the kennel surroundings, s/he generally will settle in like a kid at summer camp! However, it is generally our advice to get pets who have never boarded used to the experience by arranging an overnight a few times before any extended stays. Normally cats are very happy to board by taking on an "observational" role. They do not seem as interested in making new friends or in activities. However, they do like to be placed in quiet, high traffic areas where they can watch us work and grab our attention as they please! Usually they

reach out of their kennels to tell us when their ready for a scratch and to play. Normally, kittens take to boarding easily because they are almost never left alone! And finally, we cannot stress enough: **pets are very empathetic without the benefit of understanding the emotions that they feel are coming from us DO NOT allow anyone at home, or dropping off the dog to indulge in an emotional goodbye.** These dramatics are unnecessary and unfair to your pet because it places the unnecessary burden of anxiety upon them. If one or more family members do not feel up to controlling their emotions when dropping off their pet, perhaps it's best to have a single family member or a friend do it.

4. Sometimes pets get excited: It is wise to feed your pet the morning before boarding, but not the night before or the morning that you are dropping him or her off—unless of course special medical needs forbid fasting. This will help your pet avoid excitement-related colitis. Pet owners who allow their dogs unlimited access to either food or water immediately after returning home, frequently trigger vomiting and/or diarrhea. If your dog appears to be thirsty, provide a few ice cubes, and small amounts of water, rather than a whole bowl of water. Let him or her calm down (about four hours) before offering food, and offer food in portions throughout the day. Some times some mild diarrhea can occur or vocal hoarseness in the days following pick up due to a pet's excitement in the kennel or upon arriving home. Be advised that we are happy to treat your pet, but our boarding kennel is not financially responsible for biological or medical conditions directly or indirectly related to boarding or stress.

5. At Check-In: Allow enough time at reception to fill out the necessary paperwork. Unless you have pre-filled out the form, we need you to take the time to fill out the boarding admission form carefully so we have appropriate and accurate contact and care information. Sometimes it's hard for people to remember to do this when they drop off their pets often for boarding, but you may be dealing with new staff, and it's important to let us know each time. All of this information helps us to take better care of your pet--especially if there is any type of emergency requiring special action. That's why you are paying professionals to look after your pet! ☺ Before dropping off your pet, consider who may be authorized to pick up your pet in your absence—for your security, we need their information on the boarding admission form in order to release your pet to them. If someone else is going to pick up your pet, make payment arrangements for their release in advance, but do not expect to pre-pay in case your pet's pick up is delayed. We may ask you to walk to your car while we stand with your pet in the reception area before taking him/her back to the kennel area. This is done so that your pet will understand that you have entrusted us with his/her care—he or she will understand that we are not abducting them. We cannot allow people to take their pets back to the kennel area for four simple reasons: the controlled environment of our hospitalized patients, the presence of anesthetic machines, our controlled substance pharmacy and the radiograph suite. All of these areas must be passed or are in close proximity of our kennel and the final three areas concern our building insurance, which prohibits us from allowing the public access to these areas. We can show you the kennel by opening a few doors and allowing you to look from the exam room, and pictures are available on our website for your perusal.

6. Relax! Enjoy your trip: Remember that you are leaving your pet in the hands of capable professionals. Pets in the kennel probably often engage in more activity and receive as much, if not more attention than they do at home. However, if you observe anything that concerns you before drop-off or after pick up, please contact us—we'll be happy to discuss any questions you might have.

