

HOLIDAY AND PETS

HOLIDAYS WITHOUT YOUR DOG.

If you own a dog it can be very easy in the excitement of planning your holidays to forget to make proper arrangements for your pet. With so many people taking holidays abroad it is even more important to plan your dog's holiday. The most important thing to remember is not to leave him alone at home, in the garden or the street to fend for himself. Not only would this be cruel, you could also face possible prosecution from the authorities. There are two options available to you if your holiday cannot include your dog, you can either arrange for a responsible friend or relation to care for him or you can book a place in a local boarding establishment.

If you intend to try the former, make absolutely certain that the person has the time and the inclination to care for your dog properly. It is advisable that the dog is kept on a lead whilst exercising if he is not very familiar with the friend or the area. Be sure to leave the telephone number of your vet, in case of emergencies and a number where you can be contacted.

A boarding kennel is often the best solution, however you must book early because they become full very quickly during the summer months. Choose your boarding establishment carefully. All reputable kennels should be happy for you to inspect their facilities but owners may wish you to call at a certain time so as not to disturb the dogs already there too much. The runs should be clean and airy and the sleeping area should be adequate to protect your pet from the weather. Make sure the kennel area is secure so that your dog cannot escape.

Whether your dog stays with someone you know or is boarded at a kennel, there are things you can do to ensure that he enjoys his holiday too. If possible, arrange for him to be fed his normal diet as sudden changes of food can lead to stomach upset. If he has his own basket take it and any toys he particularly likes with him.

You should always ensure that your dog's vaccinations are up to date anyway, but it is even more important if you plan to put your dog into kennels. Boarding establishments cannot accept your dog unless it has a current vaccination certificate. Do not take your dog to the kennels in a last minute rush, try and make a separate journey to settle him in properly, this will save your dog much stress.

HOLIDAYS IN BRITAIN WITH YOUR DOG.

You may decide to arrange a holiday that includes your dog. Take care to check that the hotel, campsite etc. will allow dogs. Before deciding to take your dog with you be sure that you do not intend to visit places like museums where dogs are not allowed. Remember that you cannot leave a dog alone in the car even on a dull summer's day. Many dogs die every year because they have been left in a car... even leaving the windows open will not save your dog's life.

If you do take your dog with you and you need to drive a long distance to reach your destination, your dog may suffer from travel sickness. Even if your dog normally travels perfectly all right in the car, long distance may make him unwell. Speak to your vet who will probably supply you with preventative tablets.

Try to stick to your dog's normal diet and make sure he always has access to fresh clean water, particularly if you visit the seaside because salt water can make a dog sick.

HOLIDAY TIPS

- Never throw balls or sticks along cliff tops – dogs may chase them over the edge.
- Watch out for bottles and rusty tins on the beaches.
- If playing in the sea or other deep water, stay with your dog and don't let it get out of its depth.
- Respect the country code and local byelaws – don't let your dog worry livestock or other animals.
- NEVER leave your dog in parked cars in warm weather – even in the shade. The car can quickly become hot enough to cook food and can cause death to dogs. Owners face prosecution and heavy fines.
- In warm weather, ensure the dog has enough drinking water and encourage children to leave pets to sleep in a quiet, shady spot, as otherwise they may become irritable.
- Find out the telephone number of a local vet wherever you are in case of emergency.