

Holiday Options for your dog

There are lots of great holiday destinations in Australia where you can go on a dog friendly holiday. For those times when you just can't take your dog with you, e.g staying at accommodation that doesn't allow dogs, going on a business trip or going overseas. What are your options when you need to go away without your dog?

In home care



This may be a friend, relative or a professional dog minder. The aim here is for your dog to stay **at home in their own environment** and bring someone into your home who will look after your dog (and generally your home) while you are away. This is often the least stressful option for your dog because they are in their own space, where everything is familiar - the only thing missing is you. You can leave detailed instructions for your minder and a thankyou gift. Of course if you use a professional, you may also need to pay them. This is usually a per day rate and should be agreed in advance.

Another benefit is that your house will not be left unattended while you are away and your dog will get to stay in routine with minimal disruptions. **This is always my first and preferred option.**

Boarding kennel

My next preferred option is the boarding kennel. Finding a good one that will provide excellent care for your dog can be a bit challenging, but it is worth shopping around. It is also wise to visit multiple kennels until you find the one that fits. You may need to make a prior appointment to visit. Once you find a good kennel stick with them, as it reduces stress on your dog with every repeat visit – the kennel becomes more familiar to them so they relax more. Boarding kennels provide a safe, secure place for your dog while you are away. Your dog will be closely monitored, exercised and provided with health care if needed. If your dog requires an extended stay, plan ahead and do a series of shorter stays to familiarise your dog with the kennel. This will help to reduce stress when your dog is boarding for a longer period of time.



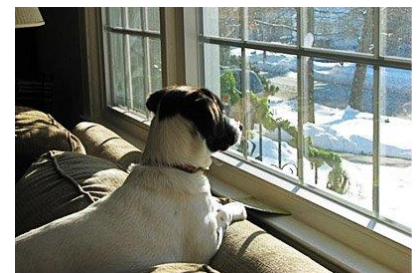
Dog minding



For easy-going dogs, you can use a dog minding service where your dog goes to someone else's home or alternatively goes to a friend's home. Keep in mind though that some dogs will become quite stressed going to an unfamiliar environment and that another person's home may not be as secure as either your home or a boarding kennel. Dogs often escape while they are being minded in another home. If possible, plan way ahead and take the dog to visit many times before you leave them there and also trial some overnight stays. It is best if your dog is not left in the new environment alone so that they can be monitored for signs of stress or escape behaviours.

Food and water option

Should only be used in absolute emergencies. Usually a neighbour, friend or relative pops in to give the dog food and water. Occasionally the dog will be walked or play a ball game for exercise. The dog is usually given company for 10 minutes to an hour a day – basically as long as it takes to feed, water and, if they are lucky, exercise them. The problem with this method is that the dog is home alone for too long. Should it get injured, sick, bitten by a snake or get a paralysis tick, they may not live to see the carer return. This option should only be considered in an emergency situation where you will just be away overnight.



Remember that your dog is your responsibility, both morally and legally. Part of that responsibility is ensuring that you provide your dog with the best care possible, so consider the top three options first. **Otherwise go on a dog friendly holiday so your dog can be with you.** Always plan ahead. Your dog deserves the best you can give.