



# Who should I leave my dog with when I have to leave them behind?

Whether you're heading out for a weekend getaway or an extended vacation, deciding where your pet will stay is one of the most important parts of planning your trip. The right environment ensures your furry friend is safe, comfortable, and cared for — giving you peace of mind while you're away.

# 1. Know your pet's needs

Start by considering your pet's personality, age, and health. Knowing what makes your pet most comfortable will help you narrow down your options.

## **Social Pets**

Social pets may enjoy a boarding facility where they can play and interact with other dogs.

## **Shy or Anxious Pets**

Shy or anxious pets might prefer a quieter environment and enjoy staying with a familiar face in their own home.

## **Senior Pets or those with medical needs**

Senior pets or those with medical needs may require extra attention, medications, or supervision and might do better staying with a pet sitter.

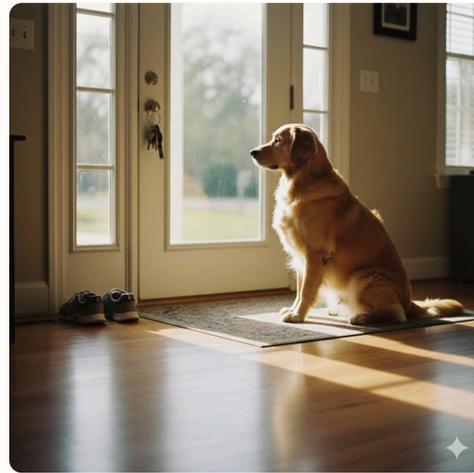
## 2. Explore your options

There are several types of pet care available — each with its own benefits.



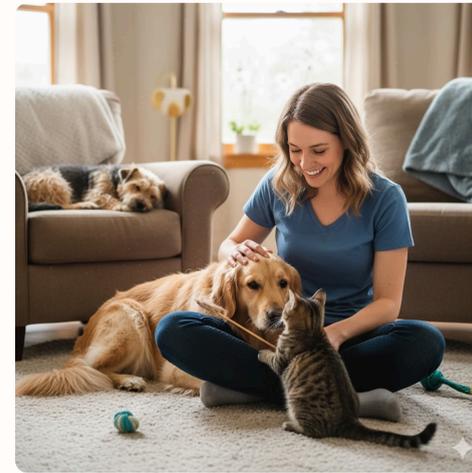
### Boarding Kennels or Pet Resorts

A good option for dogs that enjoy socialization and structure. Look for facilities with supervised playtime, climate control, and clean, spacious accommodations.



### In-Home Pet Sitters

A great choice for pets who do best in their familiar surroundings. Sitters can visit several times a day or even stay overnight, providing personalized care and maintaining your pet's normal routine.



### Out-of-home Pet Sitters

Similar to an in-home pet sitter, except your dog will go to the pet sitters house. This can be a great alternative to a boarding kennel for social dogs, especially if the sitter has their own pets or takes multiple dogs at the same time.



### Family or Friends

If your pet already knows and trusts someone, this can be a comfortable and budget-friendly option. Just make sure your helper knows your pet's schedule, quirks, and emergency contacts.

### 3. Visit before you book

If you're considering a boarding facility or pet sitter, always schedule a tour/meet and greet before committing. A reputable business will be transparent, allow you to see where pets stay, and happily answer all your questions. Make sure to pay attention to:



**Cleanliness and Odor**



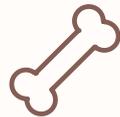
**Staff Education and Friendliness**



**Safety Measures**



**Pet-to-Person Ratio**



**Playtime and Enrichment Options**

# 4. Ask the right questions



## Facility & Environment

- Can I take a tour of the facility before booking?
- How are the dogs housed — individually, or do they share spaces?
- What are the sleeping arrangements like? (Kennel, suite, crate, open room?)
- Is the facility climate-controlled year-round?
- How often are the dogs taken outside, and for how long?
- What kind of flooring or bedding is provided?
- How is the facility cleaned and disinfected? How often?



## Daily Routine & Activities

- What does a typical day look like for the dogs?
- How much supervised playtime or exercise do the dogs get?
- Are playgroups supervised at all times?
- How are playgroups determined (size, temperament, play style)?
- Are there options for one-on-one time instead of group play?
- Are enrichment activities or training sessions offered?



## Health & Safety

- What vaccinations are required before boarding?
- Are flea/tick preventatives required?
- How do you handle medical emergencies?
- Is there a staff member on-site 24/7?
- Do you have a relationship with a local veterinarian?
- How do you handle a dog who becomes sick, stressed, or aggressive?
- Are dogs monitored overnight?



## Feeding & Medication

- Can I bring my dog's own food?
- How often are dogs fed each day?
- Can you accommodate special diets or feeding instructions?
- Are staff trained to administer medications?
- Is there an additional charge for giving medications or supplements?



## Behavior & Comfort

- How do you handle dogs who are anxious or shy?
- What's your policy if a dog doesn't get along with others?
- Can I bring my dog's own bed, toys, or blankets?
- What happens if my dog doesn't eat while boarding?



## Communication & Updates

- Do you provide updates or photos during the stay?
- Who can I contact if I want to check in on my dog?
- How do you handle emergency contact situations?



## Pricing & Policies

- What's included in the boarding rate?
- Are there extra fees for playtime, walks, or medications?
- What is your cancellation policy?
- What are your drop-off and pick-up hours?
- Do you offer discounts for extended stays or multiple dogs?



## Staff Training

- How are staff members trained?
- Are staff members CPR certified?
- What is the staff-to-dog ratio?
- Is every staff member trained in dog body language?
- Are staff members trained how to safely and effectively break up a fight?
- Are staff members primarily out of high school?



## 5. Check Reviews and Recommendations

Read online reviews and ask for referrals from your vet, friends, or local pet community. A personal recommendation from someone you trust can be more reliable than a flashy website.

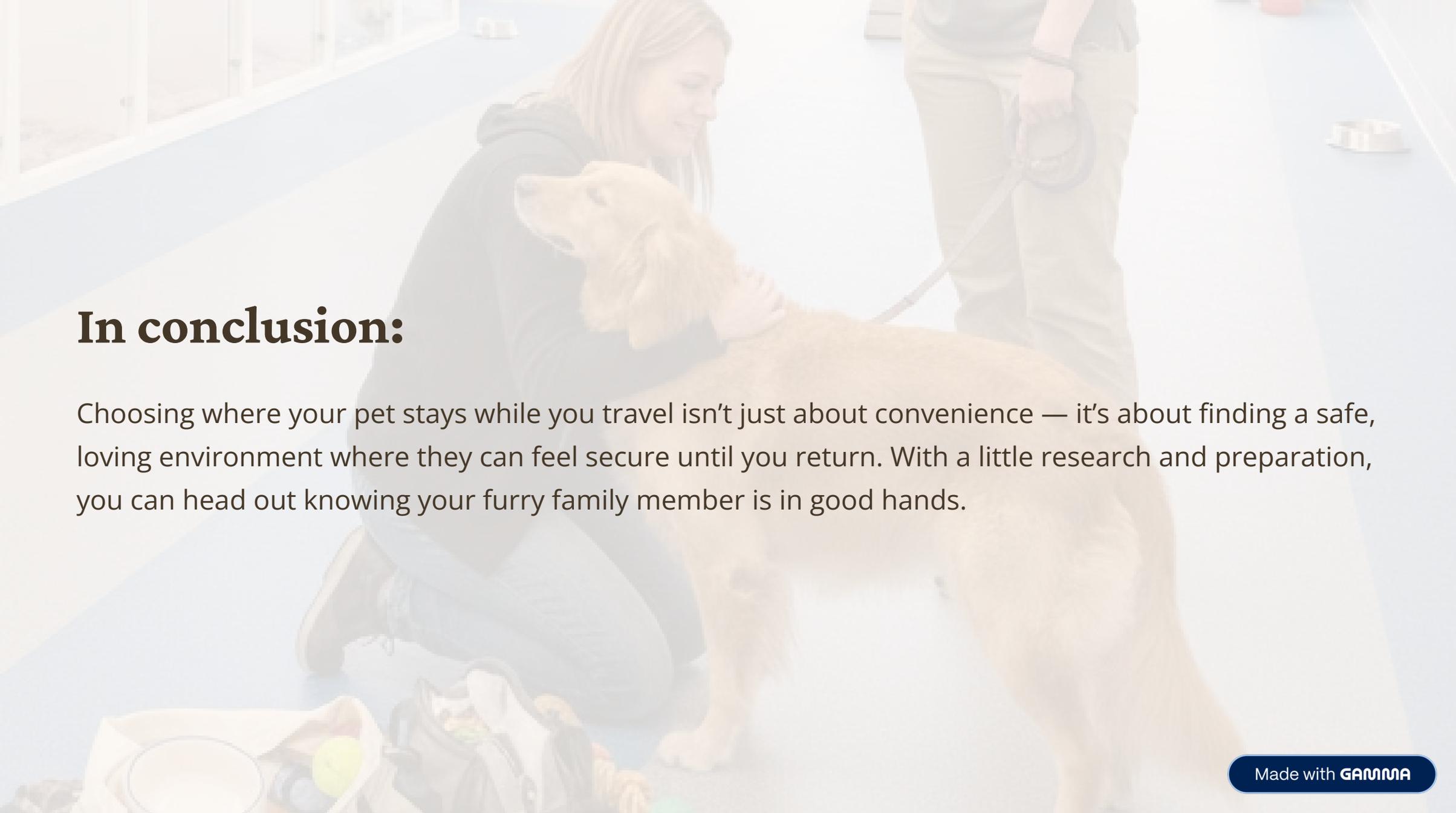
## 6. Prepare before you go

Help your pet adjust by doing a short trial stay or having your sitter visit while you're still home. Pack familiar items like their blanket or favorite toy, and leave detailed instructions about feeding, medication, and routines.



## 7. Trust your gut

If something feels off — whether it's how the staff interacts with your pet or how the facility looks — trust your instincts. The right place will make both you and your pet feel comfortable from the start.

A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a dark hoodie and blue jeans, is kneeling on a light blue floor. She is smiling and petting a golden retriever. The dog is standing and looking towards the woman. In the background, there are other people and dogs, suggesting a kennel or training area. The overall scene is bright and positive.

## **In conclusion:**

Choosing where your pet stays while you travel isn't just about convenience — it's about finding a safe, loving environment where they can feel secure until you return. With a little research and preparation, you can head out knowing your furry family member is in good hands.