

## Tips On How To Choose A Dog Walker & Pet Sitter.



*“Pet Care” has become a popular business lately.*

*Learn to choose a walker & sitter wisely with these simple tips.*

**Are you seeking a professional to watch your pets or just a neighbor next door?** Either way may work. However, your pet is a professional pet sitter’s first priority and has both a business and ethical obligation to care for your pet. A neighbor, despite their best intentions, may run into circumstances that bump your pet

down to second or third (or worse) priority.

**Do they have a legally binding business agreement?** Many may have a “contract” that’s simply an overview of their services. However, make sure to choose the professional that has a well thought out agreement that protects you, your pet, and the service provider. Look for an agreement that contains the following information: Business Name/Contact, Business Registration/Filing Status (corporation, sole proprietor, etc), Services Provided, Exact Fees, Veterinary Contact Information, Payment Details, State of

Governing Law, and Insurance Coverage. Additional information may include Indemnification, Equal Opportunity Employment, or other clauses.

**Do they have liability insurance, including “CCC”?** This is a must for anyone who calls themselves a professional, so make sure they have it. Without liability insurance, you personally may have a greater chance of being involved in a lawsuit should something out of the ordinary happen. Make sure to ask to see the provider’s proof of insurance, which is easy for them to show you. Also, make sure their



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insurance covers “CCC”, otherwise known as “Care, Custody, and Control”. The typical liability coverage includes only incidents related to other parties, but without “CCC”, your pet may not actually be covered him/herself!

**How is their business structured?** Are they a sole proprietor, partnership, corporation - or do they not even have a business actually in place? The key here is to make sure you’re dealing with a registered organization. If it ends up you’re dealing with just an individual that has no business filed within the state of your residence, it may be harder to accomplish things with the authorities should anything out of the ordinary happen.



**Will they visit your home before the first assignment** to meet the pets and get detailed information about their care? It’s strongly recommended that this be done so that not only can they get to know your animals, but also for you to evaluate them in person as a responsible and caring provider. As opposed to a phone conversation, a face-to-face meeting is typically a much more effective and efficient process for understanding if there’s a good match between you and the pet care organization.

**Do they exhibit courtesy and professionalism** in all dealings with customers, staff, and industry colleagues to positively represent their company and the pet care industry? Luckily, many of the

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people in the pet care profession are in it for the love of animals. However, there are, unfortunately, always a few that may not have the same motivation. If you aren’t being treated professionally, it could be very likely they’re also not exhibiting courtesy and professionalism towards your pets while you’re away.

**Do they “look” professional?** Although you’re obviously out to hire a great pet care provider and not necessarily a great marketing guru or graphic designer, the fact that a company has a professional site and materials says a lot about their dedication to providing an exemplary pet care service. Because an overall marketing effort takes a lot of money, time, and effort, the very few providers that go to these lengths to promote their businesses are likely to also be those that offer extremely reliable and trustworthy services with dedicated and educated staff.

**Can you “connect” with them with social media?** A company that encourages you to engage and talk with them with social tools like [facebook](#) gives you an indication that they have nothing to hide.

**Do they return calls and emails the same day?** Make sure they have an established communication system where you can reliably get in contact with them on short notice. If not, they

may not only be too “busy” to provide the level of service you may be expecting, but it may also be a problem in case there’s an emergency either before or during the pet care visit.

**Can you critique their service after the first visit?**

True professionals in many different industries will allow you to voice an opinion on what you liked and didn’t like so that they can improve the service they provide to you. This is one of those finer details that really sets the *great* companies apart from the merely *good* ones.

**Can they give any type of proof that they actually did what they said they did?**

Although a reputable company isn’t in the habit of shortchanging their customers and their pets, most people would love to see some type of documentation of their provider’s efforts. Examples could be a note, an activity checklist, or, in the case of the [dogsloverunning.com](#) service, [GPS tracking](#) that shows customers exactly where we were at what time, as well as a number of other valuable and interesting statistics.

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