



# NOSE — to — TAIL



## **Top Tips for Choosing a Boarding Kennel or Dog Minding Service**

A companion to the book *Nose to Tail* by Louise Harding

[www.nosetotailbook.com](http://www.nosetotailbook.com)

# Top Tips for Choosing a Boarding Kennel or Dog Minding Service

## Boarding Kennels and Dog Minding Services

Boarding, especially in large establishments is not for every dog. Some dogs thrive in this environment and others don't enjoy the experience. Is your dog friendly and sociable towards other dogs? If the answer is no, then this option is probably not for you.

Boarding kennels should always be inspected well ahead of any planned booking. This will allow time to find alternate accommodations if for some reason the kennel is unsuitable. Ideally do a 'drop in', an unannounced visit. In my experience, what you see when people are unprepared is a more accurate reflection of how the kennel operates.

### During your inspection take note of the following:

- **Kennelling** How big are the kennels? Are the sizes adequate for the size of the dogs being housed? Are dogs sharing kennel spaces? How many dogs in each? Do the kennels have protection from the sun and rain?
- **Fencing** Is the fencing high, strong and well maintained? Does it run to ground level to prevent small dogs from ducking under?
- **Cleanliness** Are the kennels clean, without faeces and hazard free? Are there any strong odours emanating from the kennels or play areas? Are all the outdoor spaces clean and hazard free?
- **Environmental Enrichment** – Are there safe toys and plenty of them to avoid competition amongst dogs?

# Top Tips for Choosing a Boarding Kennel or Dog Minding Service Continued

Ask the kennel manager these questions.

## Questions to Ask the Shelter or Rescue Organisation

- ***How will my dog be housed? Will he be sharing a kennel? How do you determine which dog will be a suitable kennel mate with my dog?***
- ***How many permanent staff are there on the premises? Are there staff on site full time or once the dogs are confined are they left unattended?***
- ***How many dogs are in a social group?***
- ***How many staff supervise group play? A 1:4 ratio is acceptable in most cases; however it will depend on the types of dogs, their breed and personality characteristics. Common sense should prevail.***
- ***Will my dog receive one-on-one time? Will he have time in an exercise area on his own?***



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