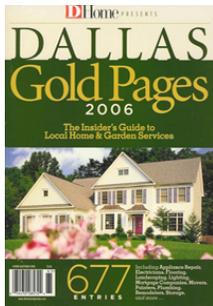


House & Pet Sitting



We cook for them, brush their teeth, take them to the park and cuddle and pamper them. No, not our children, our pets. The trend of taking dogs to the kennel is long gone thanks to a new industry that has popped up in the last few years. Pet sitting is here to stay, and Dallas has some of the best pet care professionals. Pet sitters generally take care of home-related measures as well as your creatures, so take that vacation, and know that the dog will be fed and the lawn will not die.

GRAND PAWS PET SITTER

972-931-0054

www.grandpawspetsitter.com

Standing in a dark room having five Sugar Gliders (tiny flying nocturnal squirrel-like creatures) jump and climb on you, then rewarding them with grasshoppers, is not your usual pet sitting service. However, for Grand Paws Pet Sitter it's all in a day's-well nights-work. Owner Dana McKool left the world of advertising to pursue her passion for animal care. Having been in a position to need pet sitting frequently while traveling for business, her new career direction came naturally. "My goal is to provide superior pet care with integrity and professionalism while having fun along the way," she says. Her service is customized to every client's requests, including playing with flying squirrels. Grand Paws only takes appointments.

BE PREPARED

Put the Details in Writing:

Having someone take care of your prized possession is serious business. Draw up a contract, detailing all responsibilities and instructions. Make sure the individual is completely comfortable with the task. In addition, leave emergency phone numbers for your preferred service providers such as plumbers, electricians, and air-conditioning/heating professionals. If you are leaving pets, make sure to highlight the after-hours number of your veterinarian – and alert the animal clinic to your pet's status. Some clinics keep a strict list of approved names and appointees and will not release or treat a pet under the instruction of unauthorized individuals. Inform your neighbors of the situation and, if possible, make introductions. If you have a home security system, speak to the alarm monitoring company about the arrangements as well as specific dates of your departure and return.

Pet Chemistry:

Pets, like children, have built-in radar systems that pick up friendly and hostile vibes. Do a trial run with the sitter and your pet. Observe some interactions that will reveal compatibility or a potential problem. For instance, let the house sitter take your dog for a walk or watch her give your cat its daily medication. Your comfort level will rise considerably when these situations go well.

References, References, References:

If you really don't know the sitter, check and recheck as many references as possible – preferably within your neighborhood or community. When speaking with a reference, ask detailed questions about responsibilities and performance.