

Important Information Your Dog Walker Needs to Know

Are you looking to hire a dog walker but not sure what information they may need to know from you?

This information sheet will help you prepare for some of the questions your dog walker might ask and offer you ideas for additional information to share with them to make sure they are able to create a strong, long-lasting relationship with you and your dog.

Here is some information your dog walker will need to know:

Your dog's general temperament/demeanor.

- If your dog is generally more nervous or if they are usually more outgoing may change how your dog walker works with them
- Some dogs may be more environmentally nervous. This is an important piece of information for your dog walker to know so they can accommodate if necessary

If you have had a dog walker for your dog before.

- The more information you can provide about your dog's relationship with their previous walker, the better
- Your dog walker can use this information to help make your dog's walks more enjoyable and successful

How your dog interacts with unfamiliar people.

- If your dog is nervous of new people.
- If your dog is outgoing and friendly with new people.
- If your dog is potentially aggressive towards new people (in or outside of your home)
- How your dog reacts to people coming to the door
- This information will help your dog walker know how to approach and work with your dog

How your dog interacts with unfamiliar and familiar dogs.

- This will help your dog walker determine if your dog would do best in private or group walks
- If your dog is reactive on leash, but friendly with dogs off-leash, they may be better off in an off-leash setting, versus a leashed group walk
- If your dog has specific friends in the neighbourhood they get along with
- If your dog doesn't get along with other dogs, then your dog walker will know to do private walks and avoid other dogs during their walks

If your dog has any ongoing behaviour concerns.

- Many dog walkers will not accept dogs with behaviour concerns
- Being upfront about any behaviour concerns you have been working on with your dog will help your dog walker determine if they feel comfortable working with your dog



- There is no shame or judgement in having a dog with behaviour concerns, but not all dog walkers will feel confident in working with this, and they may have suggestions for trainers who can help you work through these concerns with your dog

If your dog has ever bitten a person or another dog.

- Not all dog walkers will feel comfortable working with a dog who has a bite history
- It is important to be honest about your dog's history to ensure the safety of your dog and your dog walker

Your dog's regular walk route.

- Some dogs feel more comfortable walking a familiar route, especially with someone new

How your dog is on leash.

- If your dog pulls on leash or walks ahead or behind you
- If your dog takes lots of sniff breaks or weaves from side to side
- This information will help your dog walker know what to expect when walking your dog

If your dog is allowed off leash.

- If your dog will respond to recall if they are off leash or if they should stay on leash throughout walks
- If you have specific areas where you let your dog off leash
- Make sure you and your dog walker are both on the same page about your dog being let off leash

What equipment your dog wears for walks.

- If your dog is walked on a collar, harness, or head halter
- If you use a standard or extendible leash
- If your dog wears jackets or boots in the winter or when it rains
- Making sure your dog walker is informed about what equipment your dog normally wears will help your dog feel more comfortable on walks
- Keep in mind, not all dogs will be comfortable with a new person putting equipment on them, so this may be something you and your dog walker will have to work through together
- Some dog walkers may also have a preference for what equipment they walk your dog on (example: a harness and standard 6ft leash)
- Your dog walker will also need to know where your dog's equipment is kept

Your dog's favourite things.

- If your dog loves treats of all kinds or is a picky eater
 - Also if your dog has any dietary restrictions
- What your dog's favourite toys are or if your dog doesn't care for toys



- Some dog walkers will have treats on them or use play to engage your dog to make sure they are really enjoying the time they spend out with them

Things your dog doesn't like.

- If your dog has any specific triggers (noises, objects, etc.) that they are afraid of or will bark at
- This is important information for your dog walker to know so they know how to proceed if they see or hear one of these triggers when out with your dog

Where and how to pick up or drop off your dog.

- If you will be home or away when the dog walker comes to pick up your dog and drop them off
- If you will provide a key for them to keep or in a lock box
- What entrance to take them in and out of if there are multiple entrances to your home
- If you have an alarm system that they need to know about and how to disable when picking up and dropping off your dog

Emergency contact information.

- Make sure you and your dog walker have an emergency plan in place in case something happens when they have your dog out for a walk
 - Make sure they know who to contact and in what order
- Provide them with contact information with a relative or close friend if they cannot reach you
- Provide them with the name and contact information for your dog's vet clinic
- Ensure your dog walker is aware of any previous or ongoing medical issues or injuries so they know what to look for and what is normal or abnormal for your dog

See our [How to Choose a Dog Walker](#) info sheet for more information on what to look for when searching for a dog walker.

Interested in the dog walking services offered by Toronto Humane Society?

Visit our website for more information about the services we are currently offering:

<https://www.torontohumanesociety.com/pet-services/dog-walking/>

Or email publictraining@torontohumanesociety.com

