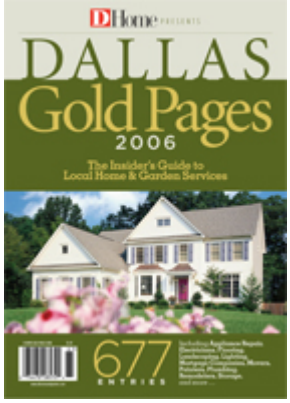
House & Pet Sitting



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.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME PET SITTING

972-394-7968

www.NoPlace.us

"You can't treat a pig like a dog," Patti Castleberry says. No, apparently a dog rubs against you for affection. A pig, on the other hand, just wants to knock you down. Pigs maintain dominance that way. And while we are at it, don't ever pet them on the head because they can't look up at you. Highly disturbing for your average pot-belly. Castleberry knows how to care for dogs, cats, birds and fish. Involved in fostering animals and in animal rescue for years with the Carrollton Humane Society, Castleberry found her path. Ten years ago, she was seeking something more meaningful than corporate America when a book about pet sitting caught her eye – and the rest is history. "In my work with animals from the shelters, I found they were often sick or had been mistreated and disappointed by humans," she says. Regaining trust is always the first step with Castleberry, and establishing trust is vital in pet sitting. She believes it's important for pets to stay in familiar surroundings. They crave routine, and it makes them feel secure and happy. She cares for pets and homes in Carrollton, West Plano, and Far North Dallas as if they were her own. One client put it best by saying: "[Castleberry] takes care of your pets better than daycare takes care of your children."

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.