



12975 W. 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Arvada, CO 80005 303-423-2243

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

Article authored by Ted & Tiffany Terroux

---

## Boarding • Training • Grooming

---

### Preparing for **Boarding & Grooming Success**

#### **Will this be your dog's first experience in a boarding facility?**

Does your dog have any kind of containment, like crating, experience? If your dog is entirely new to being in any kind of containment, then we recommend doing some prep work and pre-visits to the kennel, first. Crating is an essential skill for any pet dog in that a day will come when a veterinarian, groomer, or for perhaps other reasons, someone or you will have to contain your dog for their safety and wellness. The last thing you want is for your dog to be overly stressed out when placed into containment after surgery or for illness recovery, or for any other reason. Get them ready for real life, now, so that containment is an everyday normal experience. Call or email us for desensitization tips. If your dog has containment experience but is new to the boarding environment, ask us to schedule a pre-visit for you where your dog can board with us for one-half day (in the morning hours), giving us the opportunity to get to know and monitor your dog in the environment. You may elect to do one or more additional one-day or overnight stay in advance of a longer stay, if you like.

**First Grooming experience?** Grooming also utilizes forms of containment throughout the grooming process. If your dog is not familiar with having their paws held, being touched and brushed all over, and taking a bath, then time is of the essence to get started on desensitization and learning to enjoy the experience. Call us or email to inquire if we can schedule a brief visit, for you and your dog, to come by and visit our shop, groomer, and staff to say hello. Frequent, brief, positive visits will help your dog feel more secure for their first real visit to the grooming shop. If you would like tips from one of our trainers on how to begin a touch desensitization protocol, please call or email us.

**Health.** Take care of any needed vaccinations well in advance of your dog's visit and send us a copy of newly acquired vaccinations as soon as possible. If your dog's health changes (change in behavior, housetraining or eating habits, physical, structural, emotional, or cognitive) prior to their stay with us, please seek your veterinarian's guidance and report the situation to us, or as recommended by your veterinarian. Diabetic dogs and those with significant chronic medical issues are recommended to be boarded with your veterinarian.

**The road to the kennel— vehicle experience?** Your dog's trip to the kennel should be a calm and pleasant one. Dogs that only travel in the car once a year to some place like the vet clinic for vaccinations are likely to have a negative association. If your dog doesn't like to travel, now is a good time to start introducing more pleasant circumstances – make traveling to pleasant places a regular part of your dog's life.

**When you arrive (drop-off day):** The temptation is to engage in a long goodbye scene before you part company with your dog. Our experience has taught us that long goodbyes serve to only stress out your dog and start their stay off on the wrong foot (it's okay to say goodbye, just don't give your dog the impression that they're not ever going to see you again). Be casual, be normal and conversational with our staff. Let our staff "take your dog for a walk" to the boarding area and everything will be fine.

Be sure to have your dog(s) leash and collar securely fastened and connected before exiting your vehicle—no loose dogs allowed in the parking areas or lobby of our facility. If you are supplying your dog's own food, bring it in after your dog has been checked in. *All medications must be brought in their original prescription container from the prescribing veterinarian with a clearly visible printed label on the container.* Place all prescription containers together inside of a plastic container/baggie, clearly labeled with your dog's name (first & last), name of medication(s), and dosage information.

**What to Expect.** Private indoor-outdoor suites allow your dog to go inside or out during the day. Common sense is applied with regard to the time each dog is allowed to be outside in especially hot or cold weather conditions. Your dog is kept inside at bedtime with any bedding or toys that you provide. The indoor quarters are heated or cooled as the season demands. Suites are cleaned daily and all dogs have continuous access to fresh water. Playtime and training sessions are also available.

**We welcome your call to check on your Dog!** If you are wondering how your dog is doing, go ahead and pick up the phone or send us an email and talk to us. We keep a daily report of your dog's eating scores, and urine and poo scores, along with any other observations we may make during your dog's stay.

**Returning home from the kennel.** Especially after a lengthy stay at a boarding facility (or anywhere actually), we recommend that you **immediately supervise your dog in your household up to the first 6 hours to help keep them on track with your house rules**—sometimes dogs will seek to "reclaim" their home by temporarily breaking housetraining, or they may be temporarily confused about house rules. This is not at all uncommon. Dogs have good memory and once reminded, if needed, will fall right back into their usual home routine.

We are here to help you and your dog have a healthy and happy stay with us—please let us know if you have any questions. We hope you have a pleasant and safe travels and look forward to your safe return.