



**CDTS**  
Cranbourne Dog  
Training School

*"Positively the best- for you and your dog"*

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## What to Look for in a Professional Dog Walker

We all have demanding hectic lives with work and personal circumstances meaning that sometimes our dog is pushed to the bottom of the list. More and more people are using dog walkers to ensure that their pet isn't left at home all day and that it is socialised and exercised during these busy times. However with the rise in people requiring a Dog Walker, many have seen this as a money-making opportunity and are offering a truly appalling service.

Below is a list of questions that you should be asking – This list is not exhaustive, there may be others you want to ask, but you should have at least covered the ones listed below before entrusting them with your pet and your house key!!!

- 1) Are they insured? Don't take their word for it - ask to see their insurance certificate and find out how many dogs the insurance covers – most companies only cover six dogs on a walk and this includes any of their own dogs that are on the walk as well.
- 2) Can they provide references? Ask for current up to date references provided within the last 6 months.
- 3) Have they been police checked? This is a check on police national databases for criminal convictions and the person is provided with a slip of paper to state that they have none.
- 4) How many dogs do they have at any one time on a walk? This also coincides with question 1) as the number of dogs they take on a walk should not exceed the number covered by the Insurance and the Walker should be able to control all dogs under his or her care.
- 5) What type of transport do they have? If they have a car or van then ask if the vehicle is fitted with a tailgate guard (keeps the dog securely in the boot area when the boot lid is opened) or fitted with crates. Dogs should not be sat unsecured on the front seat and should not be squashed into the boot. Six dogs in a Vauxhall Astra Estate, for example is totally unacceptable.
- 6) How will they introduce your dog into the group? They should come round to your house to meet your dog and then invite you and your dog out on a walk with the other dogs that your dog will be walked with – your dog should never be just put into the back of a confined space with a number of dogs he has never met before.
- 7) Have they had any formal training? There are plenty of courses available for Professional Dog walkers teaching them about first aid, the law around dogs in public places and Canine Social Behaviour and should be able to provide certificates showing they have completed this type of training. Do not accept a person saying 'I have had dogs for many years' (there are many people out there who have had dogs for many years but who you wouldn't trust walking your dog) or 'I can deal with dogs with behaviour problems as I have had problem dogs in the past' or 'I can also offer you some training for your dog' (a person who is inexperienced in these areas can cause more problems than they solve – look for experience in a training school as an assistant or instructor or for a course in Canine Behaviour) as being a suitable dog walker



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- 8) How long will my dog be walked for? This should be the length of time that your dog will be out walking and should not include the travelling time to and from the park/woods or the time spent going from one house to another picking up dogs.
- 9) Where will my dog be walked and will it be off the lead? You should be asked if you agree to your dog being let off the lead and asked to sign the form containing your dog's details consenting to letting it off the lead. Any responsible Walker will also put their ID disc on your dog in the unlikely case he goes missing whilst in their care.
- 10) How much will it cost? Don't always go for the cheapest as it normally means you will be sacrificing quality.

As already stated this list is not exhaustive and you may have further questions depending on your or your dogs circumstances. If you are looking for a dog walker then please ask, as we may be able to recommend one. If you already have a dog walker and think that they are worthy of recommendation then please ask them to contact us at CDTS and we will assess whether they meet our high standards.