

## Choosing a Good Pet Sitter

**How to avoid making wrong decisions about who cares for your pet.**

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With the holidays upon us, many pet owners leave their cat or cats at home instead of taking them along on a trip. However, leaving your cat and other pets behind means owners must confront the problem of who will look after their pets and how.

So how can cat owners avoid putting their pets in dangerous health situations this holiday season when using a professional pet sitter?

Paul Mann, founder and CEO of FETCH! Pet Care, a professional pet sitting and cat visitation service, offers tips for assuring pet sitter satisfaction: Diligently check all of the company's references — at least three should be voluntarily provided. Ensure the company's fully bonded and insured. Confirm that the pet sitter has undergone a criminal background check and has received proper training. Pre-interview the pet sitter with your pet(s) present to observe interactions and establish a comfort level for you and your pet(s). Ensure the company offers seven-day-a-week telephone and email availability. Clearly state how you would like the pet sitter to use his/her visit time in terms of playing, feeding, cleaning, etc. Provide medical and behavioral history about your pet(s) as well as veterinary and other emergency contact information and gather all necessary supplies, including food, vitamins, treats and a leash in one central location. Ensure the pet sitter can accommodate both your desired vacation schedule, including busy holidays and the pet's daily feeding schedule. Ensure company has measures in place should your pet sitter have an emergency that prevents them from completing your assignment.