

## *Don't Leave Me!...but if you do*

One of the first books I read about Weimaraners stressed they are, "...not easily relegated to the kennel." That phrase stuck with me. As I learned more about Weimaraners, the meaning grew like a big ball of duct tape rolling through a feather factory.

Weimaraners have little tolerance or understanding of why they can't constantly be with you. They love their people and happiness is being with their human pack.

Life being what it is, there will be times when you just have to leave your grey buddy and deal with human situations that take you away from home. What to do with the dog(s)?

Personally, I've tried to deal with the situation in many ways like using kennels, house sitters, dog walkers, and imposing on the kindness of friends. (And sometimes, I just give up and take them with me.) However, in all cases, where the care of my dog is entrusted to someone else, I give the "trustee" a set of written instructions about the care and habits of my dogs.

It's invaluable to have a set of dog instructions that cover all the things that are important for the safety and comfort of your dog.

If you're dealing with a true emergency or just the last minute rush of leaving for a trip, you don't need the extra time drain of detailing your dog's care and feeding instructions. Take a few minutes now and write up an instruction sheet for your dogs. A little advance planning can make your departure faster and improve your peace of mind for the duration of your absence.

Why should you bother writing an instruction sheet? Drop off your dog to a friend and they're so preoccupied with the dog, that what you're saying about care and feeding gets lost in the shuffle. Use a house sitter or a dog walker and it's in the best interest of your dog, the "trustee" and your house to have your expectations in writing. Use a boarding kennel and they'll automatically ask for contact information, medication needs, special feeding instructions and health history.

What should you include in your instruction sheet?

Make sure your contact information has multiple ways to get in touch: like your cell phone number, hotel name/number, business phone, etc. Give the name of your veterinarian but also make sure if the "trustee" will use your vet or their own if medical treatment is required. If your dog takes any medicines or supplements, give the name, dosage and accurately labeled containers. (Always provide a more than adequate supply of medications, so if your absence is longer than expected your dog is covered.) How many times a day does your dog eat? Does your dog have any foods that upset digestion? List behavioral traits that include how the dog asks to be let out, and how they feel about other pets and children. Do thunder storms send your dog into a tizzy? Can your dog be left unsupervised with toys? Customize your instructions to the needs of your dog.

Remember that no one knows your dog better than you do, so take nothing for granted when outlining your expectations.

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