

How to choose lodging and what dog(s) to bring to DSA camp in MI:

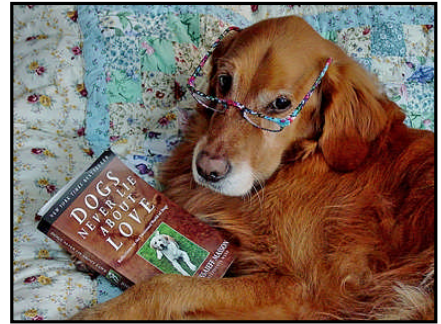
Lodging:

As a first time camper, it can sometimes be hard to decide which lodging option would be best for you and your dog. Please use the following info to be sure the lodging option you are considering will work best for your dog.

Often your lodging options are decided by your dog.

If you have only 1 or 2 well mannered and house trained dogs with you, your lodging options at camp are plentiful.

If your dog is likely to urinate on things or have housetraining accidents indoors you will need to bring your own lodging (tent, RV, etc.) or keep your dog crated when in the building or be vigilant about having your dog wear a belly band or pants that prevent accidents from touching the surface the dog intended. Piddle pads are not an acceptable alternative for lodging in camp accommodations. The floors in the lodge are concrete and accidents can seep into the floor surface making the scent hard to remove. Floors in the rental RV's are older and can also allow the scent to remain. Special enzyme cleaner is available for the occasional oops.



If your dog is destructive and can't/won't be crated you will need to bring your own lodging (a tent or your own RV). This includes scratching on doors as well as chewing things.

If your dog tends to threaten other dogs that get close to them or their crate or stuff (with evil looks, barking, etc.), or if your dog is an escape artist that will look for the smallest opening/opportunity to go find you, or your dog is likely to get into other people's treats/dog food/stuff and can't/won't be crated then a group room in the lodge is not the best or safest option. A private room, rental RV or your own RV would likely be best.

If your dog barks, howls or whines excessively during the day and/or night, your fellow campers will be grateful if you don't stay in the lodge (private or group room). The walls are too thin and everyone will hear your dog. During the day, this disrupts presentations and generally gets on nerves. At night it will keep everyone awake and make for very grumpy campers and staff. You'll need to rent or bring an RV or use a tent or stay at the hotel in town or if barking is only during the day, you may need to confine your dog in your car if weather permits. If you find out your dog does this after you get to camp, you'll be asked to move to different lodging and the upgrade or additional fees will be your responsibility. If camp is full, the hotel may be your only option. So plan your lodging accordingly when registering for camp.

TENTS: (Multiple sites available)

You may bring your own tent and set it up on a designated spot for a minimal fee. If you need electric hook-up, there are some spots that offer this for a slight increase in the tent site fee. If you don't need electric, your options are more open on where you can set-up your tent. Most tent spots are within sight of the lodge and less than a 1 minute walk to the showers and bathrooms inside. You can also choose a spot that is mostly shaded during the day or one that gets more sun.



Campers staying in tents can have as many persons as they like stay in their tent, but those persons must be registered and paid for camp. The fee is per tent, even if more than one shares the same spot. Easy-ups or screen tents to house dogs are not charged as sleeping quarters unless used as such by a person.

We do strongly recommend that tent campers keep all food products including dog food and treats in their car or the lodge to discourage wildlife from raiding your supplies. Tent campers can make use of the refrigerator provided for campers at the back of the lodge near the small lounge area.

Keeping your dog in a crate is also recommended to minimize the chance of accidental escape out of the tent. Exercise pens may be set-up, but dogs may not be tied-out to trees or other fixed objects.

RENTAL RV (6 or 7 available):

The camp does have a few older model RV's (from the 60's, 70's and 90's) for rent. These often get reserved fast, so early reservation is recommended.

The amenities and space they offer varies so check with the camp director if there is something you definitely need.

These are parked in locations where they will have shade for at least part of the day and are less than 1 minute walking distance and within view of the lodge and the showers/bathrooms in there.

As with the tent camping, you are welcome to set-up outdoor shade tents or screened tents and exercise pens (X-pens), but dogs may not be tied out to trees or other fixed objects.

BRINGING YOUR OWN RV:

We have un-paved spots and electrical hook-ups if you want to bring your own RV or trailer. A long extension chord is recommended just in case the electrical hook-up is not right next to your RV.

We do not have a dumping station and we don't have water hook-ups, but we can run a hose to you to fill up holding tanks if needed.

You are responsible for parking your RV or trailer, but if you need someone to help direct you, a helpful camper or staff person is usually available.

You are welcome to set-up outdoor shade tents or screened tents and exercise pens (X-pens), but dogs may not be tied out to trees or other fixed objects.

PRIVATE ROOMS (7 available):

Private rooms in the lodge are small, so if you have 2 people and each of you have 2 large dogs, you may not fit in a private room once you take into account crates and other stuff you'll want to bring. While the photo shows a foldaway bed, the private rooms now have larger regular beds (box springs and mattress) or bunk beds (you bring your own sheets, blankets and pillows). Check with the camp director if you have questions about whether a private room will work for your needs.



Couples are given priority for the private rooms since they don't have the option of using group rooms. But they are still on a first come- first reserved basis. So couples needing a room in the lodge should reserve early.

A baby gate or other gate can be used across the door of your room to provide increased air flow or give your dog scenery as long as your dog does not display any signs of aggression toward dogs or people walking by in the narrow hallway and your dog does not jump the gate.

As with all rooms in the lodge, the walls are VERY thin. So you will hear your neighbor's conversations and people/dogs moving about. After the first night or two, everyone and their dogs will likely be tired enough that the noise level will be minimal during the night. But if you are a very light sleeper or snore loudly, you might want to consider other lodging options. We do have soft ear plugs if they are needed. :-)

GROUP ROOMS (3 available):

These are a great option for people with well-mannered and social dogs that want to have a true “summer camp” experience in which you room with people very likely to become friends for a long time to come. Often people who met at camp this way will plan to attend the same camp and again share a group room at future camps. They also work well when 2 or more friends are attending the same camp and want to room together.

Group rooms accommodate up to 5 people per room, but we try to keep that number lower to give each person a bit more space. Each person should not have more than 2 dogs with them or take up an excessive amount of space with their stuff.



The first person to arrive gets to choose which folding, full size bed and location they want, so arriving early if you're in a group room is recommended. :-)

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MOTEL IN TOWN: (Trails End Motel on Airport road in St. Helen)

If you prefer having a TV and a private bathroom, you might want to consider the motel in town. It's not the Ritz, but the walls are thicker than at camp :-). The hotel is about a 10-15 minute drive from camp. Their 10 rooms include Air Conditioning, Microwave, Coffeepot, Refrigerator and Cable TV.

You will need to make your own reservations. The camp is in a summer resort area, so you'll want to reserve your room early. There may be a Blue Gill festival taking place at the same time as camp and this might fill up the motel faster than usual.

If you are staying at the motel, you may use your vehicle or set-up an X-pen or crates in the shade to contain your dogs at camp as long as they are not disruptive or escape artists and the weather does not pose a safety hazard. You are responsible for making sure your dogs are safe and that the sun has not moved to expose them to excessive heat, etc. There is no indoor space available for housing extra dogs during the day.

Please be respectful of the motel property. We really need them to be available to future campers and want them to look forward to having our campers as their guests. This includes keeping your dog from barking, marking or destroying property and always cleaning up after your dog.

How many dogs should you bring?



If this will be your first time at Dog Scout camp, you very strongly suggest that you bring only 1 or 2 dogs with you. Special permission must be requested in writing with the camp director if you must bring more than 2. Trust us... you will have PLENTY to do with 1 dog! There is a lot to learn and to do. Having to manage more than 1 dog can add extra stress that might reduce your enjoyment of the camp experience. We recommend you try camp first with 1 dog and then once you know what to expect, you will be better able to determine if you want to attend with more than 1 dog in the future. The dog you bring will LOVE the special attention and one on one time with you and perhaps at the next

camp, another of your dogs can get that same individual attention.

Bringing multiple dogs to camp is a privilege that is earned by showing responsibility in handling your dog(s) and managing them properly. Campers that have been to camp before that want to bring more than 2 dogs will pay a \$50.00 fee per additional dog (animals/pets other than dogs may not be brought onto camp property). The camp director has the right to decline a request to bring more than 2 dogs, even if a person is willing to pay the extra fee. This may happen based on the number of dogs already registered for camp or if a person has demonstrated having trouble managing multiple dogs in the past. If declined, you will be notified shortly after registration.



If you have brought more than 1 dog and any dog is left barking in a room in the lodge, you may be asked to move to other lodging as stated above (extra expenses will be your responsibility).

Questions to ask yourself to determine if staying in the lodge will work for you or cause you to need to find other lodging during camp:

- Is your dog stressed by being left alone in a new place?
- Is your dog stressed in a crate or otherwise confined?
- Does your dog bark, whine or howl repeatedly or excessively? (Keep in mind your dog will be able to hear other dogs and people moving in the hall, adjoining rooms and in the lecture room.)
- Does your dog give evil looks or bark at other dogs or people if they get close to your dog's crate, space, food, etc.?
- Are you planning to bring a LOT of stuff with you? (All of your stuff should be able to fit within a 10' x 10' area that includes the bed if you plan to stay in the lodge)
- Is your dog likely to chew things that don't belong to him, urinate or defecate inside, or look for the smallest opening to come find you if a door is opened when you are not in the room?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, then the main lodge is probably not your best lodging option. Consider renting an RV on-site (if your dog is not destructive and is not going to potty in it) or bring your own RV, or bring a tent or use the hotel in town. Please don't let your dog destroy property or potty in the hotel. We want them to look forward to having Dog Scout people use their hotel and be able to compliment them on their responsibility and control of their dogs.

Mini Camp:

Mini camps held at the main DSA facility in MI have the same policy as above. Mini-camps in other locations may have different rules and lodging options. Check with the camp host to verify their policies.