

LANGUAGE LEVEL: B1 INTERMEDIATE

# NEW YORK CITY WALKING THE DOG

Cuidador de perros, una profesión cada vez más popular en EE.UU., especialmente en ciudades con largas jornadas laborales. Un trabajo que requiere amor por los animales, paciencia y mucha prudencia a la hora de tratarlos.

**N**ew York is the financial and business capital of the United States. New Yorkers work long hours and they often leave their children at daycare centres, or with babysitters. But many New Yorkers also leave their dogs at day-care centres, or with 'dog-sitters'.

The typical New York residence is a small apartment and this isn't ideal for a dog. For this reason dog carers or 'sitters' are often paid to take

dogs for a walk. But when New York dog owners\* are really busy they can leave their four-legged friends at a special dog 'spa' or hotel.

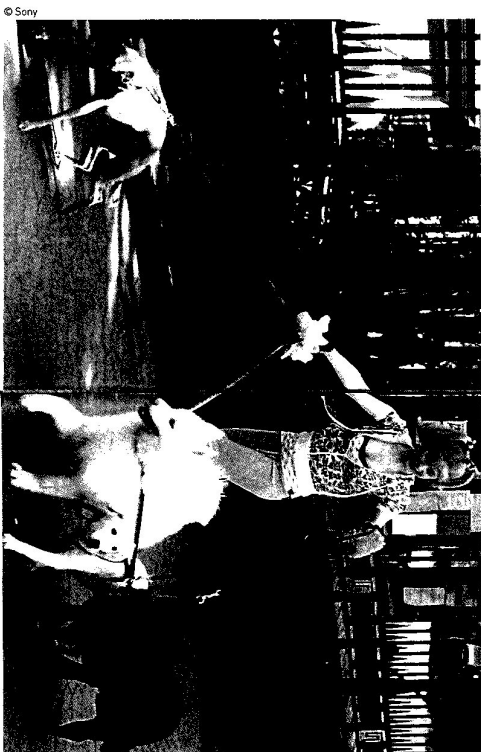
The New York Dog Spa and Hotel opened for business in 1998. Today it has two locations: one at 32 West 25th Street, near Chelsea, and another at 415 East 91st Street, on the Upper East Side.

The Spa isn't cheap! A week's 'boarding' could cost between \$400 and \$500, and this could go up to \$700, if the dog is taken for a daily walk, and has 'grooming' and bathing†.

If you just want to leave your dog for a day, then this will cost \$36 (for a small breed) and \$39 (for a larger breed).

The animals are divided by size: smaller and older dogs are kept on one floor, while the larger dogs are kept on another.

**AFTER HOURS**  
Looking after other people's dogs can be a fun job. A dogsitter can make \$15 an hour: this is more than twice the minimum wage\* in the USA (currently \$7.25 an hour). Working as a dogsitter can be an attractive option for young foreign



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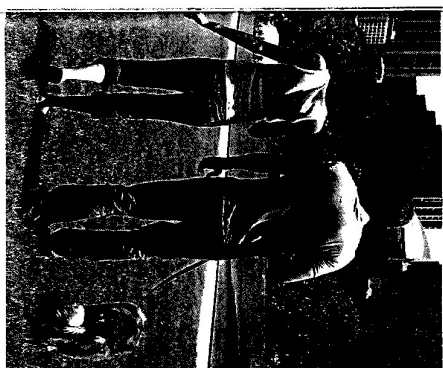
The exclusive New York Dog Spa and Hotel. Top: Even Gene Wood as a dog-sitter in Wendy Allen's 'Whisper' video.

visitors starting out in New York, but also for young Americans.

Jacqueline Turf (see interview, right), for example, is a 23-year-old college graduate who grew up "surrounded by dogs." She says her job is "great: it's like owning pets", except that you have a lot of them!"

**GLOSSARY**

- 1 DAYCARE CENTRE: guardería
- 2 OWNER: propietario
- 3 TO GROOM: cepillar
- 4 TO BATH: bañar
- 5 BREED: raza
- 6 SIZE: tamaño
- 7 WAGES: sueldo
- 8 TO GROW UP: crecer
- 9 PET: mascota



**Four-Legged Friends**

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After graduating from college, New York resident Jacqueline Turf chose an original job: she became a dogsitter. Instead of looking after people's children, she looks after their dogs.

She works at the Dog Spa in the Chelsea district, where she either attends to the dogs, or else takes them for walks. We asked her how the dogs felt about being left at the Spa:

Jacqueline Turf: "Some dogs really love it. A lot of dogs that come here, their owners bring them, cause they have high energy and they just don't have the time or the space to give them the exercise they need, so they come here and they get to run and play† and get that exercise out and they go home all nice and tired and can live in a small apartment! Some dogs have a little adjustment† period. We have a few dogs that actually just like to sleep! You know, so they just don't want to be alone, so they'll feel comfortable just at least having somebody sitting over there and they'll just take a nap† all day! So it really depends on the dog.

We then asked her about her more difficult customers:

Jacqueline Turf: "We have a pitbull who's unneutered†, who can be a little difficult, so any like large dog who's very strong, and isn't neutered, or is aggressive, can sometimes be a little bit... to handle†, actually, sometimes puppies† because they haven't really learned the social skills† with dogs, so they have to be taught, you know, like people, you learn, as you're a child, how to deal with other people, and so they don't really know the rules yet and sometimes they can annoy† and anger the other dogs.

We also asked about the qualities that make a good dog sitter:

Jacqueline Turf: "You have to be patient because you're not dealing with like a rational creature that you can like reason

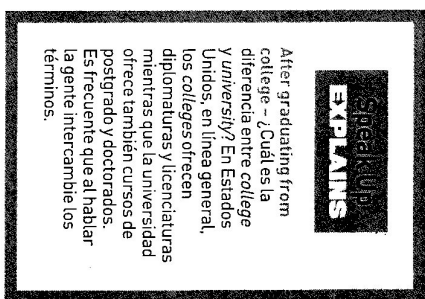


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with, so you have to be very patient. You have to have a sense of humour because like, today actually, one of the dogs came in and I just hugged† her and I had a huge allergic reaction, they must have put something on her or... so you have to be able to roll with it† because things like that will happen, or a dog will by accident scratch† you. They don't mean to, but you're dealing with† a 100-pound (45 kg) dog and he's excited to see you and he jumps on you and you know, you can get hurt†. So you kind of have to like be a little easy-going when it comes to that kind of stuff†, you know, not an angry person, because, again, you're dealing with a lot of dogs, you're going to be dealing with them getting sick or, you know, them misbehaving†, and, if you have a short fuse†, that's, you know, not good!

**GLOSSARY**

- 1 TO ATTEND TO: ocuparse de
- 2 THEY GET TO RUN AND PLAY: pueden correr y jugar
- 3 ADJUSTMENT PERIOD: período de adaptación
- 4 NAP: siesta
- 5 UNNEUTERED: no castrado
- 6 TO HANDLE: manejar
- 7 PUPPY: cachorro
- 8 SKILL: habilidad
- 9 TO ANNOY: molestar
- 10 TO HUG: abrazar
- 11 TO ROLL WITH IT: aguantar, aceptar
- 12 TO SCRATCH: arañar
- 13 TO DEAL WITH: tratar
- 14 TO GET HURT: hacerse daño, lastimarse
- 15 WHEN IT COMES TO THAT KIND OF STUFF: cuando se trata de este tipo de cosas
- 16 TO MISBEHAVE: portarse mal
- 17 TO HAVE A SHORT FUSE: tener poca paciencia



After graduating from college - ¿Cuál es la diferencia entre college y university? En Estados Unidos, en línea general, los colleges ofrecen diplomaturas y licenciaturas mientras que la universidad ofrece también cursos de postgrado y doctorados. Es frecuente que al hablar la gente intercambie los términos.