

Wilderness Trips With Your Dog

In a country that holds vast expanses of natural beauty, there's always a new wilderness to explore, and canine company only makes the great outdoors better. But if you're planning an adventure in the wilds with your dog, be sure to prepare. Your dog should be up-to-date on her flea-and-tick treatment and be fit enough for the terrain you'll be facing. Prepare with shorter hikes on trails close to home, gradually building your dog's stamina. Confirm whether the area you're traveling to requires heartworm prevention, and stock up on essential doggie hiking gear: Leash, ID tags, food and treats, water and a collapsible water bowl, poop bags and hand sanitizer, tweezers, raincoat, and booties (if needed). Right before your trip, check with park management about wildlife and weather patterns in the area. Once out there, pay careful attention to paw maintenance. Check regularly for thorns, burrs, or wounds from sharp rocks. At the end of each day, check your dog nose-to-tail for ticks. And if yours is a small dog, help her conserve energy. Unlike big dogs, small dogs don't do that automatically and may exhaust themselves. Finally, always pick up after your dog; leave nothing but foot and paw prints.