

Moving Pets

Most of you wouldn't dream of leaving your much-loved "family members" behind when your move. But pets, like people, are happiest and most content when in familiar surroundings. Many have an instinctive fear of a new environment, even though they may adjust to it quickly.

Careful pre-planning will minimize or avoid relocation problems. Pre-planning for the transfer of your pet, as well as for your household goods, should begin as soon as you know you are going to move.

Consider...

State Laws and Regulations – Almost every state has laws applicable to the entry of pets. Contact the state veterinarian in the capital of your new home state to learn the laws. You should also contact the city clerk or town hall in your destination city to learn about license fees and regulations for your pet.

- Vet Visit – Many states require a health certificate listing of all inoculations and verifying that your pet is free from infectious disease. Ask your vet for the certificate and keep it handy when traveling. To find a vet in your new state, ask your current vet for a recommendation. You can also call the AAHA at (800) 252-2242 and ask for the Member Service Center or visit their Web site at www.healthypet.com.
- Pet Identification – In addition to permanent identity and rabies tags, make an ID tag with your pet's name, your name, destination address, and an emergency name, address and telephone number, in case you cannot be reached. A luggage-type tag with writing space on both sides is easy to use.
- Familiar Surroundings – Once moved into your new home, use your pet's familiar food and water dishes, bed, blanket, and toys to make him/her feel "at home." Try to keep things in the same locations as they were in your previous residence – for example, food and water dish by the back door.

Moving Your Pet by Airplane

Contact airlines for their rules and regulations, transportation charges and pet insurance. You will be responsible for a shipping container/carrier to transport your pet.

- Make your reservations well in advance, because pet approval is granted on a first-come, first-served basis.

- Feed your pet no less than five or six hours before flight time, and give him/her a drink of water about two hours before take-off.

Moving Your Pet by Auto

Plan ahead and purchase carriers, supplies and first-aid kits. Start a list of items you'll need for a pet travel kit including collapsible dishes, favorite toys, your pet's regular food and a few treats.

- If your pet is not used to car travel, start taking him/her on short trips to get accustomed to car motion. If necessary, ask your veterinarian about tranquilizers to relax your pet.
- Do not feed or water your pet just before starting. A few treats during the day will keep him/her satisfied. Plan regular stops to give your pet a drink or a short run. Take a container of fresh water with you, because a sudden change in drinking water may cause a temporary upset stomach.

Moving With a Dog

After moving into a new house, immediately walk your dog around the neighborhood so that he/she becomes familiar with the new area.

- Maintain the feeding and walking schedule from your original residence.
- Immediately establish boundaries in your neighborhood or yard for your dog to roam.

Moving With A Cat

Do not let your cat outside until he/she is familiar with the new living environment to reduce the risk of running away.

- Constantly surround your cat with familiar items during the move to reduce the emotional effects on your cat.
- Do not expose your cat to your new living arrangements all at once. Limit the number of rooms the cat is allowed in and gradually let your cat explore.