



Moving with Pets

A step-by-step guide to keeping your pet calm, safe, and comfortable.

Moving can be stressful for pets, especially when familiar surroundings and routines change. Careful planning can help keep the transition calmer and more comfortable for everyone. Start planning for your pet as early as you start planning for your household goods.

Before You Move

- ☐ Make a moving schedule and stick to it, so you can care for your pet without last-minute scrambling.
- ☐ Schedule a vet visit early. Let your vet know you're moving, update any shots that are due, and ask for a referral in your new area.
- ☐ Get copies of vet records and vaccination certificates — a rabies tag alone won't serve as proof. Ask what your new state requires and whether vaccines carry over.
- ☐ Refill prescriptions and stock up on any prescription pet food before you go.
- ☐ If your pet becomes extremely anxious during travel, talk to your veterinarian well in advance about safe ways to manage travel-related stress. Never give your pet medication unless your veterinarian has recommended it for that pet and trip.
- ☐ Confirm your new home is pet-friendly — building policies, yard space, or nearby parks, as needed.
- ☐ If your pet normally benefits from grooming, schedule it before the move rather than leaving it until after you arrive.

If You're Flying

- ☐ Book your pet's travel directly with the airline and confirm their current pet policy, carrier requirements, and any restrictions.
- ☐ Check your airline and destination requirements for a health certificate and any required vaccinations or documentation.
- ☐ Arrive early and allow time for a potty break before your flight.

If You're Driving

- ☐ Research pet-friendly hotels along your route and confirm directly with the property — policies change and online listings aren't always current.
- ☐ Keep pets crated or leashed in hotel rooms and use a "pets inside" sign to prevent accidental escapes.
- ☐ Pack a travel bag with food, water, bowls, leash, waste bags, and a familiar blanket or toy.
- ☐ Stop every few hours to walk, feed, and offer water to your pet.

Want more on preparing your whole household? See [Moving with Pets: What It Really Takes to Do It Right](#) on our blog.

On Moving Day

- ☐ Board your pet, or set up a quiet, closed-off room away from foot traffic — moving day chaos is when pets are most likely to slip out unnoticed.
- ☐ Let movers and family know not to open that door.
- ☐ Try to keep to your pet's normal feeding and walking schedule as much as possible.
- ☐ Give your pet extra attention in the days leading up to the move — familiar comfort and routine help keep stress down.

Watch for stress signs. It's not uncommon for pets to refuse food or water when stressed. Offer favorite treats, keep water available, and check in every few hours. If appetite or behavior doesn't improve, contact your vet.

Settling Into Your New Home

- ☐ Walk through your new home before bringing your pet in, checking for hazards like wet paint, sawdust, broken glass, or exposed wires.
- ☐ Keep your pet on a leash or in a carrier until doors and windows are secured.
- ☐ Set out familiar items — bedding, toys, and food and water bowls — to help your pet settle in.
- ☐ Take time to play with your pet so they associate the new home with something positive.
- ☐ Update ID tags and microchip information with your new address right away.
- ☐ Check your new yard for secure fencing and hazards before letting pets outside unsupervised.
- ☐ Keep outdoor cats inside for the first few nights, then gradually give them more time outdoors.

Pet travel requirements vary by airline, destination, and individual pet. Always confirm current requirements with your veterinarian, airline, and destination authorities.

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