

Moving successfully with pets

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Moving to a new home can be just as stressful on your pet as it is on you. Following are some tips to help you help your pet through this change of address.

- Talk to your veterinarian at least three weeks before the move to determine if your pet will need medication for nervousness or car sickness.
- Gather the supplies your pet will need during the move - food, water, medications, medical records, bedding and toys. It also helps to bring along some of your dirty laundry because the familiar scent of these belongings is comforting to your pet.
- Keep your pet away from the moving-day activity by confining him to a room where he feels safe, otherwise, your pet could become frightened and bolt out the door unnoticed. It's difficult to pack, move furniture, and keep an eye on your pet at the same time. Maybe you have a friendly place where your pet can stay during the packing and moving, like a neighbor, friend or boarding kennel. As much as possible, try not to disrupt his daily routine.
- Be sure your dog or cat has a tag with your new phone number or the number of a friend so there will be someone to contact if your pet gets lost during the move.
- Move small animals, like birds and hamsters, in their cages, covered with a lightweight fabric. Remove water and any other objects that might loosen and injure them. You must keep the temperature constant for these small friends to survive.
- Unpack and settle in a bit before turning your pet loose in the house. Keep the doors to your extra rooms closed and slowly give your pet access to them as they become accustomed to their new home.
- Orient your dog or cat to the new surroundings. If possible, try to place their favorite resting place (dog bed, chair or cushion) in the same position or area, as it was in your old home. Put their food and water bowls and toys in familiar places as well.
- If you have a dog, walk him around the house, yard and block. If you have a cat, sit quietly and pet her, preferably while sitting in a familiar chair. Provide a place for your cat to hide (she'll do this anyway). Make sure she's eating, drinking and using her litter box.
- Be patient, loving and reassuring with your pet, and they'll adjust quickly to their new home.