



Moving House with your Pet



Moving house with your pet

Moving house can be a stressful time for pets and their owners. If you're thinking of moving, there are a few things you can do to make the experience easier for you and your pet.

Preparing for the move

- **Maintain a Routine** - Pets like familiar routines so try to stick to your normal routine for as long as possible in the lead-up to the move and then return to this as quickly as you can in your new home, especially in terms of when they are fed/exercised.
- **Tags** - Have a tag made with your name, new address and phone number that you can put onto your pet's collar on the day of the move. If your pet does run away during this period, an up-to-date tag will increase the chances of your pet being returned to the new address.
- **Micro chipping** - Microchips are methods of permanently identifying your pet and can be invaluable in recovering your dog / cat if they should become lost. If your pet doesn't already have a microchip, we strongly advise that you consider getting one before the move, with your new address and contact details. If your pet has a microchip, be sure to contact your microchip provider with your new details prior to the move.

- **Transport** - Plan your pet's journey to your new home – it's important that animals are safe and secure in vehicles, so you will need a dog guard, seat harness or carrier. If your pet is not used to travelling in a carrier, put the carrier in its sleeping area a few days before the move to give your pet time to get used to it.
- **Travel** - If you are planning to move a long distance away, speak to your vet about ways of making the journey less stressful for your pet. There are medications available to help pets that suffer from severe anxiety and travel sickness.



- **Reassuring Your Pet** – To help with your pet's anxiety, you may wish to speak to your vet about obtaining a plug in device to use before, during and after moving. Also, confine your pet to one room with some of their favourite toys and bedding, be sure to reassure your pet with lots of love and attention (they may be worried that they aren't coming with you) and finally, leave packing your pet's toys and bedding until the last minute.
- **Kennels/Catteries** - If you're really concerned about your pet during all of the disruption of packing up your home, consider putting them into a kennel or cattery for a few days, particularly if they have been there before (when you've been on holiday, for example) and were happy there. Bear in mind that you'll have to book your pet in some time in advance and you'll need to ensure that all vaccinations are up to date, as reputable establishments will ask to see a vaccination certificate. Or, perhaps there is a familiar friend or relative your pet would be happy to stay with during this time.



Moving day

- **Tag** - Put your pet's new tag on.
- **Transport** - Make sure your pet is secured in the car or vehicle it is to be transported in, with a guard, carrier or harness.
- **Travel** - Make sure your pet gets plenty of toilet and water breaks, and ensure there is a fresh supply of air in the vehicle.

Your pet's new home

- **Make Your Pet Feel Welcome** - Place your pet's toys and bedding in a secure and comfortable spot in your new house as soon as possible. Avoid washing your pet's bedding for the first few weeks, so that they will have something that smells familiar in the new house.
- **Protect Your Pet** - When you arrive at your new home, confine your pet to one room along with some familiar belongings. Your pet may be stressed by the upheaval of moving and there may be open doors through which it could escape.
- **Pet Proof Your New Home** - Prepare your new home before allowing your pet to have free access. Move breakables or "chewables" to higher ground and make electrical cords inaccessible to curious paws and noses. Ensure that any area of your new house that you want to be off limit to your pet is blocked off securely.

- **New Surroundings** - Both dogs and cats may try to return to their original home following a move. To prevent that happening, it may be necessary to keep them inside or under supervision if outside, for the first few weeks in your new home. Don't let them go outside unaccompanied for at least a week and make sure they are wearing an up-to-date identity collar with your new contact details.
- **Set a Containment Policy** - It is essential, if you have a dog, that you have a secure method of keeping your pet on your property. Check your fence for spots vulnerable to chewing or digging. If your new property is not fenced in some way, please stress to family members that your dog must be leashed at all times when taken outdoors, until you have made the necessary changes.
- **Behaviour** – Your pet may behave differently in the first few weeks in its new home. For example, you may notice that there may be a few more "accidents" than usual. This is perfectly normal. Remember that your pet is adjusting to its new environment. Give your pet time to adjust and avoid either punishing it or giving it more attention than usual as changes in your behaviour will only add to your pet's anxiety.

If you have any questions about moving house with your pet or a query about any aspect of this fact sheet, please email us at enquiries@iapwa.org and our Veterinary Panel will be happy to advise you.