

Making the Move With Your Dog.

Tips for making the transition; it's possible!



Plan ahead to avoid surprises

- Check the local laws: Find out if you need a new license, what the laws are, and whether there are breed bans in place. Your new landlord might be fine with a Rottweiler but some local governments, neighborhood associations, and insurance companies do not allow certain breeds.
- Find a new vet: Don't wait until your dog gets injured or sick. Do some research to find out if they'll need any new vaccinations or preventative medications. Does your new area have ticks, heartworm, or leptospirosis?
- Get your dog microchipped and be certain your cell phone number is on their collar.
- Make sure your dog has identification. We've all read the wonderful stories about dogs who were lost during a household move and eventually found their way home across country. This is so rare that it's always news. Better to have an ID tag on the pet's collar and have your pet microchipped for permanent identification.

Prepare your dog for the trip

- Crate train your dog now if you'll be needing one for the move. Most dogs love crates, but no one wants to be forced into one for the first time on moving day.
- Use a soft-sided pop up crate.

Packing up

- Makes suitcases not scary! You may have noticed your dog getting nervous the last time you pulled out a suitcase for a trip. Imagine how they'll act when the whole house is being packed up! Condition them by having a few boxes and suitcases out ahead of time, so they don't associate those objects with you leaving.
- Start training now: your dog might need to live by different rules in your new home, especially if you are downsizing from a single family home to an apartment. Define behavior goals ahead of time and working toward them before the move. Train them now to stop barking if you'll have closer neighbors. Get them on a bathroom schedule if they won't have access to a doggie door.
- Prepare them for what's ahead: Even before you move you can start getting your dog used to the new world by taking them to similar environments or simulating new noises. If your move is not far, try walking them in the new neighborhood, introducing them to the neighbors.
- Ask your vet about calming medication for the trip, and try them out ahead of time.
- Consider anti-anxiety gear for the big day, such as the ThunderShirt.

What to do with your dog on moving day

- Give your dog a break at a pet sitter's home. During the hustle and bustle of the move. Boarding dogs for a few days with a pet sitter is a great idea.
- Pack for your dog: In addition to the basics of food and water, have a few favorite toys, extra towels and bedding.
- Don't clean their blankets or towels: You might want a fresh start, taking the smell of the old house to the new one will do a lot to ease your dog's anxiety.
- Prepare for the worst: Bring medical records, microchip numbers and a current photo in case the unthinkable happens and your dog does get separated. Make sure your microchip information is updated to your new address and a correct phone number.
- Keep them safe in the car. Make sure they always have ventilation and are secure. There are also dog seatbelts you can buy to keep them safe during travel.
- Feed them lightly, especially if they have sensitive stomachs.
- Get the ya-yas out. Check your route for off-leash areas, short hikes, or dog-friendly parks along the way. You need a break and so do they. Scout ahead for dog-friendly restaurants.

Helping your dog adjust to their new home

- Pet-proof your new place: If you have a fence, check every inch of it for places they could escape. Use gates as needed, indoors and out.
- Keep your dog on a leash: It will take time for your dogs to learn where they can and cannot be inside and outside of your new house. You may also have potentially dangerous items like cleaning supplies or human food out before you've totally unpacked.
- Create a familiar space: Arrange beds, crates and toys as close to your old setup as you can. Stick to their previous feeding and walking schedules.
- Explore safely: Get to know the new neighborhood bit by bit, rather than all at once. So many new things can be overwhelming for a dog. Remember, they hear much more than you do. They may never have seen a pool before, or heard the sound of a basketball court. Meet your neighbors so your pet knows who is allowed on their block and who is "stranger danger."
- Make their new world fun. Use mental stimulation to tire active dogs. Hide food around the house (only where you want the dogs to be) and feed them from Kongs or food-dispensing toys. Brain games help too.
- Don't expect perfection. Dogs adapt fairly easily to new situations, but there is a lot to take in. Stay calm, reinforce positive behavior, and spend more time interacting with your pet.

If you're flying

- Always do thorough research to find an airline with a good safety record for transporting animals. Once you find one, call the airline to ask about their pet policies. Can your pet travel in the cabin together with you – usually only small cats and dogs are permitted – or will they need to fly in checked baggage or cargo? What are their pet travel carrier or container regulations (they vary by airline)? What paperwork do they need?
- Be aware that airlines usually allow a limited number of animals on any flight. If this means switching days so you can travel on the same flight with your pet, it is recommend you do this. And try to book a flight with no stopovers.
- In some cases, especially if you're moving overseas, it may be easier to hire a pet transportation company to handle your pet's move. They'll handle a lot of the stressful stuff for you: book your pet's flight, advise you on the shots and paperwork needed (and check to make sure it's accurate), pick up and transport your pet to the airport, and pick up your pet at the other end and deliver her to her new home.

Moving with your pet is completely possible. It may take a bit of hard work at first for everyone to make the adjustment, but it will get better and your furry friend will settle into your new home.

If you're moving into an apartment make sure you reach out to local friends or family, search in the internet and local newspaper, and even local social media pages for pet-friendly apartments in various price ranges. Part of your commitment to getting a pet is making sure you're willing to take on the extra financial cost that may come with have a pet. This includes possible pet rent or deposits when living in apartments. Speak with landlords to make sure you understand their pet policies and what they expect from you as the owners.