



Finding a New Home for Your Pet

Below are some suggestions on how to successfully find a new home for your pet

Preparing your pet for a new home

- Spay/neuter your pet and make sure s/he is up-to-date on all vaccinations
- Groom your pet before taking pictures so he/she will look their best when being considered by potential new owners
- Prepare a history of your pet including veterinary records, diet and exercise routine, experience with other animals, personality traits, favorite games/activities and behavior quirks or difficulties with certain situations (i.e. hides during thunderstorms). This will help you and the potential new owner determine if the pet is a good fit.

Finding the best re-homing option for your pet

- If you purchased the pet from a breeder, contact them and ask if they will take the pet back or help you re-home the pet. Responsible breeders often have "first option" clauses in purchase agreements that dictate they be contacted before you re-home the animal.
- If you adopted the pet from a rescue, contact them and ask if they can take the pet back or have other options to help you re-home the pet. Most rescues also have contracts which dictate they are contacted or the animal be returned to the rescue if an adopter can no longer keep the pet.
- Look to your circle of family members, friends and co-workers. Friends and family are the number one way pets find new homes. In this age of technology, Facebook and Twitter are options for reaching out to your network.
- Prepare a flyer and post where prospective adopters may frequent, including vet offices, work, pet stores, and church. Include a photo, description, appealing qualities, limitations and contact information.
- Post an ad on Petfinder.com or Craigslist.com. Petfinder.com is widely viewed by people looking to adopt pets from shelters and rescues, but it also includes a section where private owners can place an advertisement. Use the same information you would include on a flyer.

Should you charge a fee for your pet?

There are a variety of perspectives to consider when asking a fee for your pet; however, you need to decide with which option you are most comfortable.

- Are you worried asking a fee for your pet will keep potential owners away because they feel you are trying to profit from re-homing the pet?
- Are you concerned that if you don't ask for a fee prospective owners will not value your pet nor be prepared to continue your pet's quality of care?
- Are you concerned that if you offer your pet "free to a good home" that it may be acquired by people who gather animals for research or re-sell animals for profit?

Asking for a nominal fee and/or advertising that the fee will be donated to your local rescue or a humane society can be the best course of action.

What to consider when choosing the right home

The following questions to ask a prospective new owner will help clarify if they are a good fit for your pet.

- Is this pet for you or someone else?
- Are pets allowed in your home/condo/apartment?
- Do you have pets now? If yes, what type of pets? Tell me about each of them.
- Have you had pets before? If yes, what types and where are they now?
- Do you have children? If yes, how old are they?
- What attracted you to inquire about my pet?

The prospective new owner's answers will help you understand what type of pet owner they are, their pet-owning history, and if you feel they are suitable to take in your pet. Truly interested prospective new owners will ask about your pet's health, behavior, likes/dislikes and why you are giving up your pet.

Meeting the prospective new owner or family

It's important to consider your safety and the safety of your pet when meeting with a prospective new owner. It is best to meet in a neutral location (park, outside a coffee shop, etc.). Once there, watch as they greet and interact with the pet.

- Is the person or family interacting appropriately with your pet?
- Are they friendly and gentle?
- Is everyone there from the new family that needs to be?
- Ask additional questions to get answer to your most important questions and concerns.

If you aren't comfortable with the interaction, feel pressured or have doubts, it is okay to tell them the pet doesn't seem compatible with their needs and you've decided not to proceed. Remember, you're looking for the best new home for your pet.

Making the transition easy for your pet and its new owner

Once you're selected a new home for your pet, gather materials for the new owner and prepare the pet for the move. Please know that once you turn over possession of your pet, you are giving up all ownership rights.

- Provide the person with all veterinary records.
- Take the pet's toys, beds, food, medication, etc. for its comfort.
- Get the person's contact information to stay in touch, if you'd like.
- Provide the person with any behavioral information s/he might need.
- Document that you transferred ownership and materials, and any conditions or expectations with which you and the new owner have agreed.
- If your pet is microchipped, contact the microchip company to facilitate the transfer of ownership information.

The Animal Humane Society is the leading animal welfare organization in the Upper Midwest dedicated to engaging and serving local and regional communities of people and animals. Through its comprehensive programs and services at its locations in Buffalo, Coon Rapids, Golden Valley, St. Paul and Woodbury, the Animal Humane Society provides resources that compassionately serve all the stages of an animal's life.

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