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Tips for Moving Pets

Before leaving your old home, securely attach an ID collar on your pet with his/her name and your new contact information.

If you're moving a short distance, ask a friend or relative to watch your pets for the day. Changing homes can be upsetting, and keeping them away from the action will alleviate some of the stress, as well as prevent them from causing delays.

To prepare a pet for air travel, visit a veterinarian for current vaccinations and any medication your animal may need (and perhaps sedatives, to lessen the stress of travel) check airline instructions: They may require a health certificate from a licensed vet issued within 10 days of travel. If you're moving to another country, contact the appropriate agency at least four weeks in advance for information about potential quarantine requirements

If flying, choose a nonstop flight, if possible, to avoid excess handling as well as climate and air-pressure changes.

Traveling long distances with animals by car can be difficult; many get carsick, and accommodations must be planned in advance to guarantee that pets will be welcome. Make frequent stops on the way so your pet can drink, eat, and stretch.

Check licensing laws for your destination before departing, and secure copies of medical records and any necessary health certificates from your veterinarian.

Birds and caged pets are susceptible to drafts and changes in temperature, and should therefore travel with a black cloth draped over their cages.

If moving a bird internationally, you must obtain documents from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service before leaving the States. Such preparation is critical for birds covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

Once settled, allow your pet to explore your new home; if he/she seems upset, confine him/her to one room, and keep food, water, a favorite bed, and a toy (and litter box) there for a day or two.

If you have fish that you do not want to leave behind, ask for advice from your local pet store. Some pet stores will store and ship fish, but this is typically an expensive process. Otherwise, it is usually most humane to find a good home for your fish and buy new ones once you've settled.

