

Pet Sitter Instructions

- To help ensure that your pet is properly cared for, give your pet sitter detailed written instructions, and discuss them with the sitter.
- Make sure the sitter knows the dates of coverage, the preferred times for visits, and the number of visits needed.
- Give the sitter clear instructions on every aspect of your pet's care, including feeding, medicating, cleaning up, waste disposal, and activities and walks that your pet enjoys.
- Ask the sitter to look at your pet at each visit; seeing an empty food bowl is not enough to confirm that your pet is all right.

The Basics

The best way to develop a good relationship with your pet sitter is through open, honest communication. To help ensure that your pet is properly cared for, give your pet sitter detailed written instructions, and discuss them with the sitter. Ask the sitter whether he or she has any questions regarding the instructions. Give the sitter the written instructions before your trip and leave a copy in plain view in your house.

Make sure the sitter knows the dates of coverage, the preferred times for visits, and the number of visits needed. You may want to ask the sitter to call or e-mail you after the first visit to confirm that you are on his or her schedule.

Give the sitter clear instructions on every aspect of your pet's care, including feeding, medicating, cleaning up, waste disposal, and activities and walks that your pet enjoys.

Ask the sitter to look at your pet at each visit; seeing an empty food bowl is not enough to confirm that your pet is all right.

Inform the sitter of your pet's illnesses or idiosyncracies. For example, if your pet hides from strangers, where are his or her favorite hiding spots? Does your pet try to escape from the house? Does your pet bite?

Contact Information

Except for emergencies, always contact your sitter during his or her listed hours. Be especially considerate of sitters who operate their businesses from their homes. Make sure to check time zone differences before you call.

Give the sitter your contact information: cell phone number, land-line number(s) of where you will be, and e-mail address. Make sure that you have the sitter's contact information.

Give the sitter your house key and the name and phone number of someone who has a spare key.

Provide the names and phone numbers of your veterinarian and an emergency contact. It is also very helpful if you call your veterinary practice before you leave. Give them your contact information and tell them what type of emergency care to provide your pet if it is needed and they are not able to reach you. Make sure the sitter knows where your pet's carrier and/or leash is in case of an emergency.

If another sitter will be checking on your pet or home, give the sitters each other's name and phone number and clarify their responsibilities and schedules.

Pet-Sitter Organizations

National Association of Professional Pet Sitters

Web site: www.petsitters.org

Email: napps@ahint.com

Phone: 856-439-0324

15000 Commerce Parkway, Suite C

Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054

Pet Sitters International

Web site: www.petsit.com

Phone: 336-983-9222

Sittercity

Web site: www.sittercity.com

Phone: 888-748-2489

Choices and Considerations

List the names and phone numbers of contractors (for example, electrician, plumber, maid service, yard or pool maintenance service) in case a problem arises.

Around the House

Show the sitter where you keep your pet's food, medicine, treats, bowls, bags for waste, toys, carrier, leash, and litterbox. Let the sitter know where to find cleaning items (for example, vacuum, mop, broom, dustpan, sponges, cleaners, trash bags).

If you need the sitter to handle household details other than your pet's care (for example, bring in the mail/newspaper, water plants, take the trash/recycling to the curb), leave instructions.

If there are areas in your home that are off limits to the sitter and/or your pet, let the sitter know.

Show the sitter where the fuse box and circuit breakers are and where to find new fuses.

Give the sitter clear instructions on every aspect of your pet's care, including feeding, medicating, cleaning up, waste disposal, and activities and walks that your pet enjoys.

If Your Return Is Delayed

If no one else in your area has your house key, have the sitter keep it until you've returned. This way, you'll know that the sitter or someone else will be able to care for your pet even if you're delayed.

If your return is delayed, call the sitter and ask if he or she can care for your pet for the additional time. If the sitter can't cover the extra time, he or she might have a backup sitter. When you return, let the sitter know that you're home.