

PRE-TRIP PREPARATION GUIDE

preparation is key

- Schedules are important! Make your reservations for a pet sitter as far in advance as possible and remember to call the sitter if you are coming home later or earlier than expected. This will allow the pet sitter to plan for extra visits or serve additional clients.
- Keep all contact information in your client profile current (phone numbers, vet information, etc.). You can contact us anytime to verify that your information is correct.
- Have everything necessary to care for your pet in one general and visible area. This includes food, treats, utensils, food and water bowls, medications, leash, can opener, toys, paper towels, cleaning supplies, garbage bags, litter and scoop, broom and dustpan and/or vacuum, towels (for rainy walks), newspapers (if paper training) and watering can for plants.
- Provide extra food, litter and supplies just in case you are not able to return when anticipated.
- Be sure to leave plastic bags for sanitary disposal of feces. Pet sitters are happy to perform this task while you're away, but shouldn't be expected to clean up accumulation prior to your absence.
- Clean out the refrigerator before leaving to avoid smelly food spoilage and wash any dirty dishes to prevent ants or other pests.
- For the comfort of your pet, adjust your thermostat before leaving on your trip and advise your pet sitter within what range to keep it. A closed-up home can get uncomfortably hot in a short period of time.
- Tell your pet sitter if bathrooms or any other household areas are off limits to your pet and/or sitter. Secure access to these areas before leaving home.
- Will other people be checking on your pet? If so, help to avoid confusion by making it clear what the pet sitter is responsible for and what other visitors will be entrusted to do.

pet proof your home

- Household cleansers, furniture polishes, disinfectants, insecticides, antifreeze, fertilizers, perfumes and make-up can be dangerous to dogs. Make sure cupboards and storage areas (such as the garage) containing these items

are secured. A bored or determined dog can *"boldly go where they've never gone before."*

- Are the toilet lids down in any accessible bathrooms?
- See that medications are locked up. The sound of pills rattling in a plastic bottle may entice the pet to chew the bottle open.
- Remove candy and nuts from coffee tables or locations where a pet can reach them. Chocolate is toxic to dogs and nuts can be dangerous as well.
- Check to see that any hobby supplies (paints, glue, needles and thread, etc.) have been placed away from an inquisitive pet's reach.
- If your pet is prone to chew, please leave *"chew toys"* and take proper precautions to guard your personal items and home furnishings from his or her teeth while you are away.

secure your home

- Make sure your pet sitter is aware of anyone who may be on your premises or entering your home during their pet sitting assignment.
- Use timers on interior lights to go on at dusk and off at bedtime, as well as motion sensors on exterior lights. If evening visits are scheduled to your home, the pet sitter will really appreciate this safety precaution!
- Make sure doors and windows are securely locked before leaving. This should include garage doors, sliding glass doors and basement doors and windows. If outside doors have panes of glass near a push-button lock, consider installing a dead bolt lock as well.
- Inform your neighbors of your absence and use of a pet sitter.
- Mow the lawn before you leave and arrange for exterior maintenance as necessary during your absence from home.
- If you have a security alarm system, please notify the company that a pet sitter will be coming to your home. Provide us with a password in case the alarm goes off.
- Have someone shovel your driveway and walkways during the winter months. This will give your home the *"lived in"* look, as well as make access to your home easier for your pet sitter.

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communication with your pet sitter

Please pick a spot in your home as a communication area with your pet sitter. This is a place that we can leave notes to update you on your pet and you can leave us notes that are specific to each visit. Here are a few examples of things that you will want to communicate with your pet sitter:

- If the pet has been ill, gotten into the garbage or a different food, so that we know to watch for vomiting or diarrhea.
- If the pet does not get along with certain other pets, or perhaps children, in the neighborhood.
- If the pet's food has been changed, in case we notice changes in their feces.
- If the pet has had a recent injury, so that we aren't surprised to see sudden limping and inaccurately assume an injury has just occurred which may need veterinary attention.
- If there should be exercise restrictions for any reason.
- If the pet needs a sweater or a coat for bad weather and where it can be found.

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