

Backup Pet Care

Do you worry about what to do with your pet when you have to go out of town? While having a friend or neighbor check on your dog or cat is a good option, eventually you may run into a schedule conflict.

If you would prefer that your pet stay in a familiar environment, a pet sitter may be the best option. The advantages of hiring a pet sitter include:

- ▶ Having someone check on your pet and home daily
- ▶ Ensuring your pet has fresh food and water
- ▶ Keeping litter boxes clean (important for cat health)
- ▶ Maintaining an exercise and playtime schedule for dogs
- ▶ Creating the appearance of normalcy because someone is stopping by your house, bringing in the mail, and taking out the garbage

Pets also benefit from a pet sitter because they can:

- ▶ Stay in their own home
- ▶ Eat their usual food
- ▶ Avoid the anxiety of being boarded or spending time with unfamiliar people and animals
- ▶ Receive one-on-one attention and affection



After selecting a pet sitter, schedule a “get acquainted” visit between the sitter and your pet. At this time, it’s helpful to:

- ▶ Show the pet sitter around the relevant areas of your house and review care instructions. Point out your pet’s favorite hiding places.
- ▶ Give the pet sitter time to “make friends” with your pet. Keep in mind that cats will often hide when there is an unfamiliar person in the house.
- ▶ Provide emergency contact information, including the phone number of your veterinarian. It’s best to give your pet sitter a backup contact for when you are flying or have limited cell service.
- ▶ Confirm that keys work and that the pet sitter knows how to work the alarm. Make sure your emergency backup contact has a spare key, too.

It’s not unusual to feel worried or stressed about leaving a beloved pet. LifeMatters can offer practical resources and emotional support. Call anytime.

Call **LifeMatters®** by Empathia toll-free anytime.
1-800-367-7474

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