



As much as you may want to take your cat or dog with you on your next holiday, a 'staycation' may be better suited to your pet. If you decide this is the best option, it's a good idea to begin researching and making arrangements early to ensure their time is as enjoyable as yours.

What to include in your Pet Guide:

- Notes on your pet's dietary and exercise requirements, medication, special routines and idiosyncrasies.
- Your pet's microchip certificate.
- Your contact details while travelling, an emergency contact who is not holidaying with you and your vet's phone number and address.
- Pet insurance paperwork.
- Where food, medication, first aid kit, carrier/crate, lead and collars are located in your home.
- Information on how to enter and exit your home.
- Your local council and pound's contact details.

IDENTIFY, UPDATE, REUNITE

The last thing any pet owner wants is to lose their cat or dog. Keep in mind your pet may experience anxiety as a result of your absence which can heighten their desire to escape and increase the risk of injury and becoming lost.

It is crucial you stay on top of your pet's identification year-round. Enable a quick and safe reunion by following the checklist below.

Checklist:

- Always identify your pet with a collar tag and microchip.
- Check that your pet's tag has your current phone number and replace if it has worn off.
- Contact your pet's microchip register to check that your current phone number and address are up-to-date.
- Always include an emergency contact. The Lost Dogs' Home has these available for no charge.

Please note: Your microchip registration is not the same as your council registration. Make sure your pet is registered with your council.

PET ACCOMMODATION

There is a terrific range of reputable boarding facilities which vary in price and service they offer. Some even provide streaming video of your pet online so you can stay in touch wherever you are! If you plan to go on holiday for more than a couple of days, arranging pet accommodation could be the best option for you and your pet.

Tips:

- Give yourself plenty of time to research and book in advance as boarding facilities can book out quickly, particularly during the holiday season and public holidays.
- Ask your friends and family for their recommendations.
- If researching online consider unbiased reviews.

Other resources and factsheets:

- To identify, update or find out about lost and found pets, visit <http://www.car.com.au/>
- Visit your state country fire authority on a bushfire plan for your pet.
- The Country Fire Authority in Victoria has a comprehensive Pet and Bushfire Safety Plan www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/pets-and-bushfires/
- For more pet health and wellbeing factsheets, please visit dogshome.com

- Remember: your pet's vaccinations will need to be up-to-date. Most boarding facilities will not accept animals who do not meet these requirements. Book a consultation at The Lost Dogs' Home's Frank Samways Veterinary Clinic today! (03) 8379 4498

FAMILY OR FRIENDS

Got someone particular in mind you trust, is experienced with cats and/or dogs and gets along with your pet? Now may be the time to call on a favour.

Tips:

- Organise a meeting to pass on important information, a 'go-to guide' on caring for your pet and allow some play time for bonding.
- Provide your sitter plenty of notice and the opportunity to opt out early enough so you can make alternative arrangements.
- Try to be sensitive that things can go wrong. It is important to not blame the sitter if something happens to your pet that was out of their control.

PROFESSIONAL PET SITTERS

Mobile pet sitters call into your home and provide services ranging from feeding, exercising and socialising your pet. Shop around for the best one that suits you and seek recommendation from people you know.

Tips:

- Meet to pass on important information, a 'go-to guide' on caring for your pet and provide ample time for the sitter and your pet to bond.

- Check references and a valid police check for the security of your pet and your home.
- Don't forget to include your contact details and those of an emergency contact.

CALLING IN

If your pet sitter, friend or family member will be calling in, it is recommended this approach is not used for extended periods for dogs. Cats, depending on their temperament and breed, may be happy with this method for a few days. While cats may seem independent, they too need regular human contact and affection.

It is recommended your sitter:

- visits twice a day for dogs, and at least once a day for cats,
- walks your dog at least once a day,
- and, provides plenty of play time and human contact.

FINAL TIPS

- **Bushfire and grassfire safety:** If you live in a bushfire or grassfire prone area, you will need to pass on your bush fire plan to your pet sitter. It is also important you have an emergency contact that lives outside the bushfire prone area.
- **Visit your vet:** Drop into your vet and let them know you will be going away and for how long. Most vets are able to arrange to take payments when you're back should something happen while you are away.



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Since our official opening in 1913, we have been a voice for animals without owners caring for thousands of cats and dogs each year. Pioneers for fair animal laws, we continue to work on the front line to reduce the number of lost, abandoned and stray cats and dogs.

We rely on public support to run services and programs, including: proactive adoption, foster care, behaviour rehabilitation, low cost desexing and microchipping, and the promotion of better pet ownership through education.