



## Helpful Tips for Pet-Sitting

### ***So you've agreed to look after someone's pet while they are away...***

Taking care of another person's pet can be stressful for both you and the animal. That's natural! Although it may seem hectic at first, here are a few helpful tips to ensure you both stay relaxed and calm while the owner is away:

- ❧ Get acquainted. Before you even begin pet-sitting, visit the home first. It's important to get acquainted with the animal and the surroundings to ensure that the animal feels more relaxed with you. If you are taking the animal to your home, ask the owner and his or her pet over for a visit. The pet will feel more relaxed with her owner present and it will make for a much smoother transition. If the pet feels uncomfortable with you or vice versa, the owner may want to look for another sitter.
- ❧ Every animal is different. If you own your own animal, don't assume that your animal and the animal you are pet-sitting should be looked after the same way. Your dog or cat may be familiar with your house or yard, while the animal you are pet-sitting may not. You certainly wouldn't want to call the owner days later to let them know their animal ran away.
- ❧ Learn the animal's routine. Not every animal eats or exercises at the same time. Try to follow the animal's regular routine as much as possible to ensure a smooth transition into your home, and then back into their own home.
- ❧ Ask for detailed instructions. Make sure you ask the owner for instructions regarding the care and feeding of the animal. If you are cat-sitting, ask how often the litter pan needs to be cleaned. In addition, if the animal is on medication, make sure you receive complete instructions for administering the medication, as well as the contact information for the animal's veterinarian. You can never ask too many questions!

Most importantly, remember to ask the owner about the animal's regular daily routine, and try to follow it as much as possible. This ensures that the pet is comfortable, calm, and at ease while the owner is away. Also, following the same routine to ensure the animal remains relaxed is important to the animal's well-being.

Provide the owner with credible information regarding your abilities. If you are a regular pet-sitter or have done it before, provide the owner with references. Both the owner and pet will appreciate the effort!