

Moving house with a cat / Cats Protection League.

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IF YOU CANNOT TAKE YOUR CAT WITH YOU

If you have to move and find yourself unable to take your cat with you, take action immediately to find a new home for him.

DO NOT WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE ABOUT TO GO!

You have the responsibility to your cat for finding him a new home, although others may be able to help you. Ask friends and neighbours, put advertisements in local newspapers and cards in local shop windows and in the reception rooms of local veterinary surgeries. Always include the cat's name, sex, colour, age etc.

Remember it is easier to find a home for a neutered cat which has been inoculated against cat 'flu and feline enteritis, so attend to these matters with your vet without delay. And, of course, the more cats you have, the more difficult it will be for you to find suitable homes. If you do find someone willing to adopt your cat, **visit the proposed home yourself** to make sure it is a genuine home where your cat will be happy and well cared for and loved (there are dealers who sell cats for vivisection after answering advertisements, so be careful). Once you are satisfied, take the cat to his new home yourself a couple of weeks before you are moving so that he has time to settle down. The new owners will have to keep him indoors for two to three weeks until he is used to them and to his new surroundings; if there should be any difficulty, you will still be around to make other arrangements.

If you seek the help of your local CPL group/branch or any other animal rescue organisation, tell them about your move **as soon as possible** so that they will have the maximum time to respond; they usually have long waiting lists and only limited accommodation for cats, but they will always do their best to help youand your cat.

THE CATS PROTECTION LEAGUE

The Cats Protection League was founded in 1927, and is the oldest Charity devoted solely to the welfare of cats.

OBJECTS

1. To rescue stray, unwanted and injured cats, rehabilitate them and rehome them where possible.
2. To provide information to the public on the care of cats and kittens.
3. To encourage the neutering of all cats not required for breeding.

Our work is carried out through Groups and Branches situated throughout the British Isles and staffed by voluntary workers. We are supported entirely by members' subscriptions, donations, legacies and our own fund-raising events.

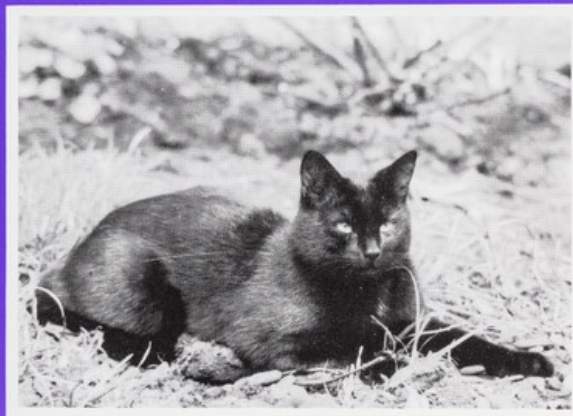
We have a large membership on the Headquarters roll and many others attached to local Branches. New members are always welcome: the annual subscription is modest and includes our magazine 'The Cat' published every other month. Life Membership and Junior Membership schemes are also available.



THE CATS PROTECTION LEAGUE
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THE CATS PROTECTION LEAGUE

(Registered National Charity No. 203644)



MOVING HOUSE WITH A CAT

Moving house can be a frightening experience for a cat unused to major upheavals in his familiar surroundings; and a frightened cat can run away and become lost—and just at a time when you are busy with so many other matters.

What can be done to ensure a trouble-free move? Here are some suggestions which might make things run more smoothly and get you and your cat(s) safely into your new home.

THE CATS PROTECTION LEAGUE
17 Kings Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5PP

ADVANCE PLANNING

Will your cat be going with you to your new home?

If you are buying a flat or maisonette, check that there are no local restrictions on keeping animals.

If you are moving into rented or sheltered accommodation or into a retirement home, make sure in advance that your cat(s) will be welcome. Do not assume it will be all right just because you have seen other animals living there; on the other hand, do not assume you will not be able to take your cat. Now that the value of companion animals is being realised, particularly for people living alone, some provision is being made for pets by authorities who used to ban them.

If you are moving abroad, special arrangements will be made with the airline or shipping line.

If you are unable to take your cat with you, make alternative arrangements as soon as possible. Do not wait until you are on the point of moving; it is very difficult for anybody to help at the last minute (please see page 4).

Assuming your cat will be accompanying you to your new home, what can you do with it on moving day?

Temporary boarding

The least traumatic experience for your cat might well be a few days in a good boarding cattery, especially if the move is a local one and he can be accommodated in a cattery he is used to at holiday time. If he is not used to going into a cattery, or if the move is over a longer distance and you decide to board him at a cattery near to your new home or on the way there (if you need to overnight en route), inspect the establishment well in advance to make sure he will be safe, well cared for and comfortably housed in a clean, warm, airy, individual pen. Unless you are also boarding a dog and your cat is used to the noise of barking, choose a boarding establishment which accepts cats only.

Book in your cat well in advance for a two or three day period over the removal. Remember that he will need up to date inoculations against cat 'flu and feline enteritis; if he has not been inoculated before, arrange for this with your vet several weeks beforehand. It is a wise precaution in any event, for a cat may have a natural immunity to local strains of illness but not to those of a new area.



Keeping your cat at home

If you decide against temporary boarding and wish to keep the cat with you, it will be necessary to clear of furniture one small room or a secure shed, fitted with a lock and key, for use on the removal day and immediately beforehand. Choose somewhere not needed by removalists, gas, water or electricity representatives and remember to earmark a similar room or shed at the new location.

Over the week before the move, encourage your pet to take his food in this retreat, possibly even sleeping there; it is not just the moving of furniture out of the house and into a van which alarms a cat—the packing up and change of routine in the household is enough to frighten as well. So, if he gets used to a safe, quiet retreat, he will not think it strange when he is shut in on removal day.

The evening before the move, put your cat in his room, provide him with food, water, a toilet tray and his own warm bed, complete with familiar blanket and/or toys, settle him down with quiet words and lock the door. Put the key in a safe place in your own possession (a good idea is on a string round your neck), so that only you can unlock the door. During removals, doors not locked can be opened by a variety of different people and the cat could escape without your even knowing.

Prepare a large travelling basket and place it somewhere where the removalists are unlikely to go—you don't want it to end up on the van! Provided it is not a hot, sunny day, it could be left in your car ready for the journey. Along with it, have ready a clean toilet tray, a water bowl and an elasticated collar showing both old and new addresses just for the day of the move.

THE DAY OF THE MOVE

On the day of the move, puss can be fed as usual if you are moving locally; if a long journey is involved, only a very light meal, or no food at all, is advised for you don't want to have to cope with a sick cat as well! Do not give a sedative or tranquilizer unless your veterinary surgeon specifically advises it; many cats are more disturbed by the resultant loss of control than by the actual move. When the removalists arrive, tell them there is a cat in the house—as a rule they are sympathetic and careful.

During the loading, you will be anxious about the well being of your pet in his locked room; wait until the men are having a tea break and then quietly unlock the door. Make sure someone else is standing by just in case puss decides to make a dash for it. Speak softly and reassuringly to him and remember to lock the door again when you leave him.

When the furniture van has gone and all doors and windows are securely fastened, transfer your cat into his travelling basket and take him and yourself to your new home. Don't forget his bed, toilet tray, food and water, and don't forget to leave behind the key which has been on a string round your neck!

AT THE NEW HOUSE

When you arrive at your new home with your cat, either direct or from the cattery, place the travelling basket, with puss safely inside it, into the small room or shed you have chosen for his temporary accommodation. If he hasn't had any food all day, he will now be hungry and ready for a meal; coax him to eat and speak softly to him and then leave him in peace. Follow the same routine as before and lock the door, retaining the key safely in your possession. Do not unlock the door again until the removalists have gone and the gas, water and electricity meter readers have also departed and you have had the opportunity of closing all doors and windows. Have a special care about any open fireplaces for an inviting chimney is attractive to a nervous cat in unfamiliar surroundings.

It is a good idea to leave puss in his room or shed until the rest of the house is reasonably straight—a matter of a day or two. Then, gradually allow him the freedom of the house, remembering always to keep windows closed—even small ones—and ensuring that there are always two doors closed between him and the outside world. Impress upon other members of the household, children particularly, the importance of closing one door before opening another. If, for any reason, doors and windows have to remain open, return puss to his room again as a temporary measure.

Most cats will need to be under 'house arrest' for two to three weeks after a move; some may need even longer.

When he first goes outside, carry him round the garden or, if he will accept it, let him wear a harness and lead, until he gets to know his surroundings. Put him down for a few minutes at a time and make sure you are close by. Do not let him out on his own until you are satisfied he is making his own way back. Tempting smells of his favourite food can help entice him back after early exploring and scattering of some of his used litter on the soil near the kitchen door will help him find his way.

In a very short time, he will have marked out his territory and will be quite independent. He will, of course, need to wear an elasticated collar bearing his new address and telephone number.