

It is also a very real possibility that if your cat appears to be distressed by this process of retrieval and return, that it might be kinder and safer if the new owner of your old home or a friendly neighbour near your old home, agrees to adopt your cat.

I'm downsizing. Will this make a difference?

If you have a multi-cat household and your cats have become used to living with the available space of your previous home, moving to a smaller property could potentially cause some issues.

As you know, cats are territorial animals so tensions may arise because of what your cat will perceive as a threat to the available resources. To limit the risk of antagonism in the new home, provide sufficient resources such as:



- Beds
- Litter trays
- Scratching posts
- Food bowls
- Water bowls
- High resting places (i.e. wardrobes, cupboards, shelves etc).
- Private hiding places (e.g. under the bed, bottom of a wardrobe etc).

Remember, moving house is supposed to be one of life's most stressful experiences. By helping your cat to settle calmly and with minimum problems, the harmony of the new home can be established just a little more quickly.



Consulting Times

Hillock Lane Surgery

Monday to Friday
8.30am to 7pm

Saturday
8.30am to 1pm



Blackpool Surgery

Monday to Friday
8.30am to 6pm

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Hillock Lane



Blackpool



Moving House with your Cat

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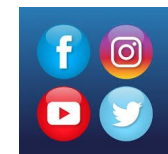
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They're just a cat! Why should I plan?

Cat's are a territorial species. They develop strong bonds with their environment and as a result, a house move can be potentially stressful for them. **However, it may not always be obvious to us that they are stressed.**

By planning ahead you can ensure that any transition from one home to another goes as smoothly as possible. Moving house is a stressful situation for humans so taking some simple steps to help your cat will ensure you have one less thing to worry about.

So what can you do?

Moving Day

- Before the removal van arrives, place your cat in one room. A room where they feel safe and have unlimited access to, such as a bedroom, is ideal. Think about where the furniture will go in the new home so that they can continue to associate the space as a safe place.
- Make sure everything your cat needs is in this room; cat carrier, cat bed, food bowl, water bowl and litter tray. Ensure the door and windows remain shut to avoid escape.



- Place a note on the door advising that this door should remain shut.
- Before the furniture in this room is removed, place your cat in the cat carrier and put them safely in the car to make the journey to the new home. The contents of this room can then be placed in the van.
- Do not transport your cat in the removal van or in the boot of the car.
- If the journey is long you may want to stop and offer your cat water or a chance to use a litter tray, although don't be concerned if they don't accept this offer.
- If it is a hot day make sure the car is well ventilated and never leave your cat inside a hot car if you need to stop for a break.
- Once you arrive at your new home, the furniture of the room your cat feels safe in should be at the back of the removal van and easy to access. This should be put back into the new home along with a pheromone diffuser in a floor level socket.
- Once the room is ready your cat can be placed inside

with their bed, food bowl, water bowl and litter tray. Again, close the door and place a sign advising that the door should remain closed. At this point a family member could sit in the room with your cat while they explore the room. You could also offer your cat some food.

- Once the rest of your belongings have been situated in your new home, allow your cat to explore. If they show any signs of anxiety it might be useful to allow them to explore one room at a time.
- It is very important that you remain as calm as

possible so as to signal to your cat that they are safe and are in a safe environment.

- Ensure that all external doors and windows are shut and be cautious about allowing your cat unsupervised access to the kitchen or utility room as particularly nervous cats will often seek refuge in narrow gaps behind appliances.

For particularly anxious cats, it might be advisable to place them in a cattery the day before the move and collect them the day after you are established in your new home.

How do I help my cat settle in?

You should keep your cat inside the home for at least two weeks so that they have time to get used to their new environment. During this time, provide small and frequent meals and maintain their usual routine as much as possible to provide continuity and to support familiarity. You can use pheromone products, such as a Feliway diffuser, in the room they associate with being safe, during this time.

For indoor cats, this change in environment may be even more unsettling for them so it may take a little longer for them to adapt. Having familiar furniture around them will help.

When can I let my cat go outside?

As we've said above, keep your cat indoors for a couple of weeks so that they become used to the new house. During this time, make sure your cat's microchip details are updated

with your new address and any new telephone numbers (if your cat isn't microchipped, please do consider getting this done).

Other steps you can take are:



- Make sure your cat's vaccinations are up to date.
- Consider fitting a cat flap for ease of access once your cat is settled and allowed outside. Electronic or magnetically controlled products, which allow for exclusive exit and entry, will help avoid the risk of a

strange cat invading your home.

- Try to deter other cats away from your garden as your cat will need all the help they can get to establish their territory as the "new cat on the block".
- Introduce your cat to the outdoors gradually. You can do this by opening the door and going outside with them into the garden. Don't carry your cat outside, allow them to decide if they want to explore or not.
- Keep the door open initially so that they can escape back indoors if something frightens them.

Outdoor cats, who may have had more experience of change, generally cope better than more timid cats who may need more time to adapt.

Will my cat try to go back to their old home?

If your new home is close to the old one, your cat may explore when it first goes out and find familiar routes that take them back to your old home. It would be useful to advise the new owners of your old home that your cat may return and ask them to contact you if they do, or if they see your cat in the area of your home.

It is important that the new owners of your old home don't feed your cat or encourage it in any way as this will confuse them. It may take many months of retrieval from your old home before your cat eventually settles down.

