

Brampton Animal Services

PET RESOURCE GUIDE





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REHOMING YOUR PET

We understand that circumstances in life can sometimes mean that you may find yourself in need of finding a new home for your pet or the pet of a loved one. If you're in this situation, we'd like to encourage you to try and rehome your pet directly rather than bringing them to the shelter. This is often a much more calming and comforting way for ownership to change hands for the pet, and means that you are able to be fully involved in the process. We're here to help and can recommend some key tips and tricks to make the process go quite smoothly. If however, you feel you've exhausted all your options, know that you can of course contact us to discuss your choices.



905.458.5800



animal.services@brampton.ca

Tips for Writing a Pet Description

One of the key components of rehoming a pet is sharing information with potential new families to help find a good match. It's tempting when writing these descriptions to share the details of why you are needing to find a new home for the pet, but remember that many people skim when reading long paragraphs and may find it more engaging to read about what to expect when living with this pet, what they enjoy, and the things that make them happy. We recommend always being honest and forthcoming about your pet, but keeping the pet description largely positive is also important to encouraging interest.

Again, when we say keep it positive, we don't mean hiding the truth. But keep in mind that we all have different expectations of life with pets. A dog who chases or doesn't get along with cats may make a perfect pet for someone who is looking for a companion for their other dogs or a person with a cat allergy. Some examples of keeping your language positive and matchmaking focused:

INSTEAD OF:

- Needs a lot of exercise
- Needs too much attention
- Isn't good with my kids
- Hates other animals

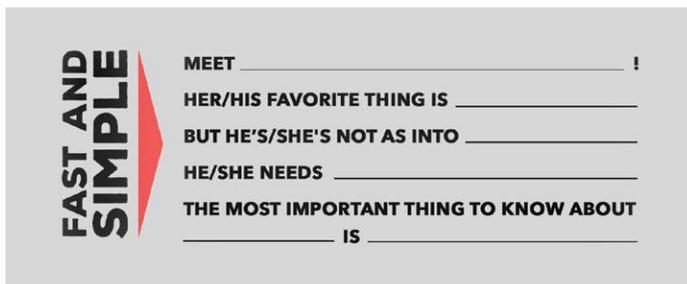
TRY THIS:

- Will make a great running partner
- Loves people/being by your side
- Needs the peace of a home without children
- Would prefer not to share a home with other pets/
would like to be your one-and-only

You can also use templates to help craft a pet description or bio for you pet if you need more guidance. Most prospective families want to know a bit about what to expect and what life will look like with this animal, so start there!



The 'roadmap' approach makes writing accurate, engaging bios easier when time and resources are limited! Try these tailored sets, or mix n' match.



For more resources on writing pet descriptions, including fill-in-the-blank tools or other language suggestions, visit www.heartsspeak.org/edu and search "bio writing."



Other Tips for Matchmaking Success

A few other tricks to successful rehoming:

- Don't rule out potential new homes before you learn more. It can be tempting to put a lot of restrictions on what you think is the perfect new home for the pet, for instance 'must have fenced yard' or 'must work less than 40 hours per week' may look different than you imagine. Someone without a fenced yard who walks the dog on a leash is arguably giving them more attention and exercise than letting them out the door into the yard. And someone who works 60 hours a week but splits their time between home and work, or hires a pet sitter, is still giving excellent attention.
- Check your email regularly and use an email address you can view frequently. Rehoming websites will use that email to get in touch with you and allow potential new homes to ask questions, etc.

Tips for Great Photos

In addition to the pet description, photos are really important to catching the attention of someone who might want to adopt your pet. Photos (and video clips) are a great way for the potential new caretaker to connect with the pet. Try for about four different images to show variety! Here are some quick tips for taking better cell phone photos at home:



Get On Their Level & Fill Frame

Rather than stand and take a photo of a pet from above, crouch down so you're taking the photo more at eye level with them. Also try and be sure they are taking up most of the photo, rather than appearing as a small part of a larger photo. This helps more accurately show size and connect with their eyes.



Use Natural Light & Avoid Harsh Sun

Oftentimes people think that a clear, sunny day is perfect for pictures — but it's actually the opposite! Sunny days make for harsh shadows and squinting, which even affects pets! Look for a shady spot or a cloudy day and your photos will be gorgeous. Using natural light like this is preferable to fluorescent overhead lights (even when indoors, just try to position things so the window is behind you, the photographer).



Pay Attention to Background

To maximize connection and impact, try to take a photo without much clutter or distraction in the background — we want the pet to be the star!



Shoot for Eye Contact

Use a funny noise, a treat, or toy — held right over the lens of your camera — to get a photo where the pet is looking at you and making eye contact.

Getting the Pet Ready for Rehoming

A healthy pet is easier to rehome so try and be sure that your pet is up to date on vaccines. If possible, reach out to your vet and ask for copies of your veterinary records to pass along to the new owners.

If your pet is not spayed/neutered, it's important to have that done before they are rehomed. You can see the "Medical Resources" section of this guide for more information on how and where to find low-cost options.



Getting the Word Out

Home To Home™ is a vital resource for families seeking to find loving homes for animals without surrendering them to a shelter. Life changes have enough inherent challenges without adding the stress of “abandoning” a loved cat or dog at the shelter. This program offers solutions that provide dignity, control and compassion.

In just a few simple steps, pets can find a loving new home without ever seeing the inside of a shelter. It's free to use for both owners and adopters, and gives animals needing a new home the best of both worlds: their current owner can find the best fit, and their adopter can learn all about their personality and preferences first-hand. It's a win-win for pets!

To learn more, visit our Home To Home™ website at <https://brampton.home-home.org/>

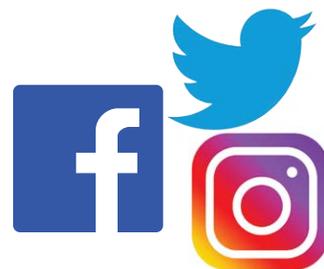


Using Social Media

Once you post your pet on Home To Home™, you can then share the link to their profile on social media to help circulate it and get more eyes on them.

When you post on any social network to share your pet, try these quick tips for success:

- Tell a story. Sometimes a heartfelt story about your pet and your search for a safe place for them to land can help people understand your choice to rehome and help get the post shared to other potential adopters.
- Be descriptive. Use the same advice as you did when writing your pet description - be positive, share important basics (weight/size, age, preferences, etc.).
- Choose your cutest/favourite photo. Grab attention and help show off their best side! Make sure it's a recent photo and accurately represents them.
- Include your contact info or ask people to direct message (DM) you. If there's a deadline for seeking the new home or other critical info, share that too.



FACEBOOK

On Facebook you can not only share a link to Home To Home™, you can also seek out Facebook groups or local pet groups in your area to post about your pet. If you're a member of local community groups (church, social clubs, community service organizations) you can ask the admin of the group if you're allowed to post there as well.

TWITTER OR INSTAGRAM

If you're a regular user of either of these platforms, then definitely share your pet there and include hashtags like #rehome #adoptadog #adoptacat #petadoption as well as hashtags for your local area or neighbourhood to make sure you're zeroing in on the right audience.

NEXTDOOR

Nextdoor is a neighbourhood or community based social network which helps ensure you're posting to folks nearby.



Other Networks & Community Connections

Consider other offline connections you have to help get the word out. You never know who might be looking for a pet!

- Friends
- Family members
- Neighbours
- Co-workers
- Community contacts
 - Schools, houses of worship
 - Membership groups
 - Community-based organizations

You can also make flyers -- using the same basic information you used in your online pet description and a few great photos -- and post them in different locations around your community:

- Veterinarian
- Pet Store
- Coffee Shop
- Restaurants, work, school or other community bulletin boards

Recommended Resources

SPEAKING OF DOGS

<https://www.speakingofdogs.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2020-Rescue-Directory.pdf>

Breed specific and all breed dog rescues.

Meet & Greet: Interviewing Potential Adopters

You want to find the best possible match for your pet, so the first step is transparency. Share with the future family any medical information, behavioural information (to the best of your knowledge), the pet's personality and lifestyle in your home, and tendencies.

From there, some thoughtful questions can help you learn more about the prospective adopter and their family:

- What is a typical day like in your home?
- What qualities are you hoping for in a pet?
- What behaviours would be hard for you to tolerate or difficult to manage in a pet?
- Do you have other pets? Tell me about them
- Are there children in your family? How old are they? Have they ever been around pets before? If very young, will they be supervised with the new pet?
- Will the pet be a member of your family or a gift for someone else?
- Will the pet be an inside/outside pet?
- Why are you looking for this particular type of pet?
- What questions do you have for me about our life with the pet?
- Can you provide a photo copy of your Driver's Licence or ID of some type?

Take time to get to know the potential adopter(s). Asking questions and having conversations with them will help you decide whether the applicant will be a good fit for your pet. If you have an uneasy feeling about an applicant, don't be afraid to gracefully walk away. Remember to always use your good judgment and the Buddy System when doing a home check or meet and greet. Listen to your pet. Your pet has instincts and will tell you if they like a person, or if they are not comfortable with a person.

It's up to you how detailed you want to be. You can go as far as writing up an adoption agreement (visit <https://home-home.org/tip/> for a downloadable version) and have the adopter sign it, asking for a Driver's Licence or photo ID for proof of identity, personal references or a home check.



Problem Solving & Solution Building

We know it's not an easy decision to rehome your pet. And it's often a decision that a lot of thought has gone into. However, if you find yourself confronting one specific issue or another, consider the solution board below.

Rehoming Solutions

ISSUE	POTENTIAL SOLUTION
<i>"I got a new job and there's no time for my pet."</i>	Have you considered a doggy day-care or a dog walker?
<i>"I can't afford my pet any longer because of extenuating circumstances." (Ex: job loss, sickness/injury).</i>	Have you asked someone you already know if they can take care of your pet until you resituate yourself?
<i>"My pet has health issues which I can't afford to manage."</i>	Have you checked out low-cost options in your area? (See Medical Resources in this guide)
<i>"I am experiencing challenges related to my pet's behaviour."</i>	Have you tried correcting the behaviour with training or speaking with a trainer?
<i>"My pet is not getting along with the other pets in the home / showing signs of agitation."</i>	If they previously got along with other pets or just recently began to change behaviour, consider taking them to a vet first to see if it might be caused by feeling unwell.
<i>"My pet has separation anxiety, or his energy is a mismatch for us."</i>	Are there things you could change about their exercise routine or mental stimulation? A bored pet can sometimes be destructive but activity can reduce this.
<i>"I suffer from allergies."</i>	Are there steps you can take to help control your allergies?



MEDICAL RESOURCES

Please note this guide does not serve as an endorsement or promotion of any specific organizations and simply reflects currently available resources. Please contact the organizations directly for further information.

Low-Cost Spay/Neuter & Veterinary Services

OSPCA

<https://ontariospca.ca/what-we-do/spay-neuter/>
Offers low-cost spay/neuter services in Stouffville & Barrie

TORONTO HUMANE SOCIETY

<https://www.torontohumanesociety.com/what-we-do/wellness-services>

Offers low cost vaccination services on multiple days each week, and offers low-cost spay/neuter services Tuesday - Saturday. All clients are welcome regardless of income.

Financial Assistance / Funding for Medical Resources

National Organizations

FARLEY FOUNDATION

www.farleyfoundation.org

Assists those who are struggling financially to pay for veterinary care for their pets.

PETCARD

www.petcard.ca

Offers a simple and affordable way to finance the treatment or product your pet needs and it allows you to get it without delay.

WAGGLE

www.waggle.org

Submit your pet's profile to raise funds for their medical care via this crowdsourcing platform. For pets with cancer visit <https://wagglefoundation.org/riedelcody/>



BEHAVIOUR & TRAINING

Please note this guide does not serve as an endorsement or promotion of any specific organizations and simply reflects currently available resources. Please contact the organizations directly for further information.

Resources

BEST FRIENDS - PET TRAINING RESOURCES
<https://resources.bestfriends.org/pet-training>
Body language, training tips, and enrichment.

DR. SOPHIA YIN DOG BEHAVIOUR ISSUES
https://drsophiayin.com/resources/dog_behavior/
Videos and articles to better understand your dog's behaviour and help you address specific concerns.

ASPCA
<https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care>
Dog, cat, equine care tips.

THE JACKSON GALAXY PROJECT
<http://www.thejacksongalaxyproject.org/resources/cat-behavior-resources>
Cat behaviour resource library.

Local Resources & Trainers

INTERNATIONAL POSITIVE DOG TRAINING ASSOCIATION
www.ipdta.org
Positive reinforcement trainers.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL DOG TRAINERS
www.cappdt.ca
Humane techniques with the Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) approach and Humane Hierarchy.

PET SUPPLY RESOURCES

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Food & Supplies

KNIGHTS TABLE
www.knightstable.org
Food assistance for pets.

FEEDING PETS OF THE HOMELESS
www.petsofthehomeless.org
Food assistance for pets of the homeless.

Thank you!





QUICK REFERENCE CONTACT SHEET



475 Chrysler Drive, Brampton,
Ontario, L6S 6G3



905.458.5800



animal.services@brampton.ca



brampton.ca/animalservices

