

A Guide for Preparing for Long-term Boarding The Sunshine Home @ This Old Cat



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At The Sunshine Home @ This Old Cat, your cats' well being and your peace of mind are **our #1 Priorities!** We've put together this information with that in mind.

These guidelines are rather universal and they'll help you and the cats -- whether you're driving them here, flying them here or even if we're coming to pick them up.

We look forward to caring for your cats while you're away. Please do let us know if you have ANY questions.

~ Paul Dewey

Plan Ahead

With space at The Sunshine Home @ This Old Cat always at premium it never hurts to plan as far in advance as possible to insure your cats have a room and you can enjoy the peace of mind knowing they'll be well cared for and safe.

A Word About Separation Anxiety



We understand your concerns for your kitties when it comes to separation. What should you be doing to prepare the cats and yourself for long term separation? Talking about them simply going on a vacation will help to communicate to them that this is only temporary, and that you will be together again! The only trauma we've seen is when there are long, drawn out "good-byes" and tears shed. Your cats know you, and they will understand your demeanor and body language. If you start talking about their "wonderful vacation adventure in Upstate NY" now, they'll feel better when the time comes. Keep it upbeat and positive and it'll be good for you, too! The more you vocalize how much fun they will have the less anxious you will feel, and the less anxious you feel the less stress they'll feel. One of our clients made up a whole story for her little furry baby about going to "Club Med for Cats!" She got us laughing so hard -- but there's no doubt in her mind, it made her feel better and made her cat feel better. So have fun, and make it an adventure!

30 to 90 Days Before Departure

January							February							March							April							May							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31															25	26	27	28	29	30	31	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	

30 to 90 DAYS BEFORE

Make sure cats are up to date on their vaccinations and have had their Feline Leukemia/FIV test done by your veterinarian. This also would be a good time to ask your veterinarian for copies of the cats' medical records. You then may either mail these to The Sunshine Home @ This Old Cat in advance of the cats' arrival or send them along with the cats, whichever is easiest for you.

For your peace of mind, decide on your wishes on what should happen to the cats should something happen to you. Ask us about our **"LETTER OF APPOINTMENT AS GUARDIAN"**, which provides for permanent care for your cats should you become incapacitated or die.



Start a list of toys, dishes, etc. that you want to go along with your cats. Bring a copy of this list for us so we all know what's yours (after several months we'll all be glad we have this list!). Think about any LARGE items such as a cat condo, chair, etc. and let us know about it. Generally speaking if it will fit into the car it *should* fit in their room.

It's never too early to start telling the cats they are going on their very own vacation! Always smile, laugh and convey a happy, positive aura when talking to them about this trip. Again, avoid being anxious in front of them as they *WILL* pick up on that!

20 to 30 Days Before Departure

January							February							March							April							May							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31															25	26	27	28	29	30	31	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	

20 to 30 DAYS BEFORE

Place their cat carriers out in the open, such as the living room. Put a small towel inside, and sprinkle a little catnip around it. Every day or so, place a cat treat or two inside. This process will help to reduce or eliminate any fear or anxiety they may have about the cat carrier.

If the cats are on a special diet or prescription medication, this is the time to refill their prescriptions and/or order enough of their food to make sure they'll have a good 30-day supply once they arrive at The Sunshine Home @ This Old Cat.

10 to 20 Days Before Departure

January							February							March							April							May							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	29	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28						
													30	31																											

Scatter a few small towels, blankets, linens, etc. about the house in places where the cats normally like to hang out or sleep. These items should then be packed up before travel day, placed in large zip-lock baggies or a sealed trash bag. These items will have their scent and the scent from home -- and there is nothing more comforting once they arrive here than familiar smells!



Buy them a new toy or two and get them playing with it. Then be sure to bring that along with them.

Get in touch with those people that you listed as emergency contacts and confirm that they know your general concerns and wishes for the cats' care.

Continue to tell the cats, all the while laughing and smiling and having fun with it, that they are going to have a ball! Tell them their vacation will be at the "fabulous Club Med for Cats"... or the "Dewey Cat Ranch and Spa"... or simply, "a place where you kitties will be pampered and spoiled"! Again, fun, happy, positive. Avoid talking about *your* plans, keep it all focused on THEM. Certainly you can tell them that you love them and you'll miss them -- but always say that with a smile and work it into a fun and happy speech.

2 to 10 Days Before Departure

January							February							March							April							May							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28	29	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28						
													30	31																											



Rustum on his Daddy's T-Shirt!

Start to collect some of your worn t-shirts, socks, etc., placing these in zip-lock baggies. These should then come along with the cats... and every few days we'll set an item out in their room so that they can smell your scent. Again, this is a proven way to greatly reduce and even eliminate stress for the kitties! Sure, it may at first sound like an odd request, but we've found that by having a familiar scent from home and their humans our feline guests are much more relaxed and comfy while with us!



Fill up a gallon jug with your tap water, to bring along with the cats. They are used to the smell and taste of this water and by slowly mixing it in with our water after they arrive, it's just one more way to help eliminate stress.

Start packing away the items with your scent and their home scent.

If you are flying or have limited space in the car, this is the time to pack those things up and ship them via UPS, FedEx, DHL or Postal directly to us here.



If you're also packing for your *own* trip, try and avoid doing that in front of the cats. Pack while they sleep or while they are otherwise occupied. If they do see you packing, make jokes about it, such as, "Hey, I'm packing all this stuff for YOU and YOUR vacation!"

This isn't the time for sadness and tears. Again, speak often about THEIR vacation, THEIR plans, THEIR fun time! This is usually about the time you'll begin to feel very anxious yourself, as the day gets closer... so it's most important, for their sake and for yours, to focus on those happy and fun thoughts and talks. You'll find that through all of this YOU will indeed be less anxious, too, by always talking up the positive.

This is also a good time to check in with us for any last minute questions or concerns.

1 Day Before Departure

January							February							March							April							May							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	24	25	26	27	28	29	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28				
27	28	29	30	31									30	31														DEPARTURE DATE!													

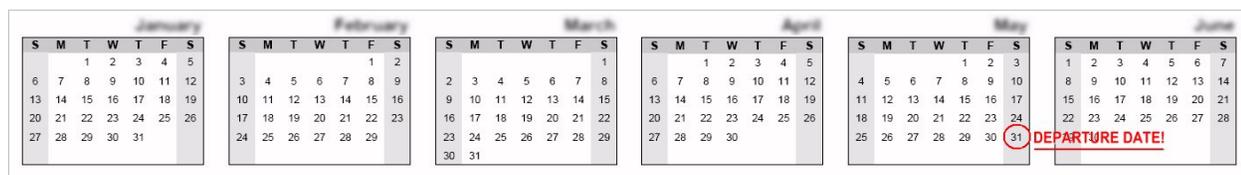


Take away their food about 6 to 8 hours before you're scheduled to leave. Leave plenty of fresh water, though! Right up until they go into their carriers.

Double check your Check List to make sure you have everything ready to go!

And, oh yes, did we mention this?: *Talk about the fun they'll have!!* 😊

The Day of Departure



Try and keep to whatever your normal routines may be for that time of day -- or at least as close to routine as possible. Don't get yourself stressed.



Get the cats in their carriers first, cover the carriers with a large towel or small blanket so it's dark inside -- **darkness is Nature's tranquilizer!!** Then place them in the corner of the room, out of the way as you load up their things.

Once the car is packed, the cats go in last when you're ready to hit the road.

It's a good idea to keep them on the back seat, fully covered (to keep it dark) and the seat/shoulder belt buckled around the carrier (if possible).

While on the road on hot, sunny days make sure there is shade so the hot sun isn't heating up the cat.

Resist any temptations to open their carrier door! We know of several instances (*NOT* cats coming here, fortunately...) where traveling cats bolted out an open window or door along the interstate, never to be seen again!



Play soft music (radio, CD), perhaps tunes that the cats are accustom to hearing at home. If they talk to you, Talk back to them with fun, happy talk!

Once again we emphasize, your cats should remain in their carriers until you arrive here and they get into their own room at The Sunshine Home @ This Old Cat.

And finally... we do have extensive experience in general feline behavior and in traveling with cats by car or by air. So if you have a question or concern, just ask!

Happy Humans + Happy Cats = a Safe and Happy Trip!

CHECK LIST

30 to 90 Days Before Departure

- Cats' vaccinations are current
- Cats' FeLV/FIV testing is done
- Copies of cats' medical records from veterinarian
- Letter of Appointment as Guardian**

Items to bring:

- Toys
- Dishes
- Litter box(es)
- Litter scoop
- Cat bed
- Cat condo
- Scratching post
- Towels, etc. with their scent
- Clothes, etc. with your scent
- Food & treats
- Litter
- Water jug
- Medicines
- _____
- _____
- _____
- Talk about the fun they'll have!**

20 to 30 Days Before Departure

- Place open carriers in living area
- Talk about the fun they'll have!**

10 to 20 Days Before Departure

- Place towels, etc. around the house
- Buy them new toys and let them play with them
- Check in with your emergency contacts
- Talk about the fun they'll have!**

2 to 10 Days Before Departure

- Check in with Paul & Debbie @ The Sunshine Home @ This Old Cat for last minute questions
- Collect worn t-shirts, socks, etc.
- Start packing up scented items in zip-lock baggies
- Get shipment package ready for any items that cannot go along with cats
- Talk about the fun they'll have!**

1 Day Before Departure

- No food 6 to 8 hours before departure time (just water)
- Talk about the fun they'll have!**

Day of Departure

- Covers for carriers
- Don't Worry, be Happy!**