

PET CARE HAND-OFF GUIDE

Keeping familiar routines steady through life's transitions.



A common challenge for families is suddenly having to find a home for a pet after the owner dies.

Owners can ease this transition with some preparation along with other advance planning. This list helps the animal adjust when rehomed or even when a spouse assumes caregiving.

Why Routine Matters for Animals

When a pet experiences a sudden change in their household—whether losing their primary owner or moving to a new home—predictability is their greatest comfort. Animals process loss through environmental cues, scent, and daily structure. Sudden shifts in meal times, commands, or sleeping arrangements can trigger anxiety or behavioral changes.

How to Use This Guide

This printable profile helps bridge the gap during a caregiver transition. By filling out the sheet on the back, you ensure that new caregivers, family members, or foster homes have immediate access to your pet's vital habits and needs without guesswork.

What You'll Document:

- **Meals & Schedule:** Exact brand, portions, times, and food preferences.
- **Medical & Vet Info:** Prescriptions, dosages, and primary vet contact details.
- **Commands & Vocabulary:** The exact words, signals, and cues your pet already knows.
- **Triggers & Comforts:** Known fears (like vacuums or storms), sleeping spots, and favorite toys.

Looking for more guidance on pet loss and behavior?

Listen to Episode [S7E26: Do Pets Grieve? How to Help Dogs and Cats After a Loss](#) on the **Everyone Dies** podcast.



PET PROFILE

Pet's Name: _____ **Breed(s):** _____

Feeding: Brand, amount, schedule, any food the animal refuses



Health: Vet and contact info. Any health conditions



Medications: Name and administration time, prescribing vet (if different)

Commands and Training: Words or hand signals the animal already responds to



Fears and Triggers: Storms, men in hats, the vacuum, whatever it is



Quirks: Sleeping spots, favorite toy, how it likes to be greeted



Routine: Walk times, crate habits, who else it's used to living with (including other pets, interactions)

