

# FAMILY FIRST

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THE PET PARENT'S GUIDE TO REAL ESTATE



ELYSE BERMAN, PA, REALTOR®



# 5 INGREDIENTS FOR A PET-FRIENDLY HOME

When you're a pet parent looking for a home for sale in Boca Raton, you're probably looking for a space that's as good for your pet as it is for you - and that means you're looking for a place with a pet-friendly yard, in a pet-friendly community. But how can you tell if the location and the outdoors are pet-friendly? These guidelines can help. The right house for your pet:

- Has a pet-friendly yard
- Is located in a community that welcomes pets
- Has durable, safe flooring and stairs
- Features play space
- Is near an animal hospital that you trust



# INGREDIENT #1: A PET-FRIENDLY YARD

A pet-friendly yard has plenty of room to play and lounge in the sun, a fence to keep your pet contained, and some shade. You'll want to ensure there are no toxic plants in it, too.

**Pro Tip:** Check the HOA guidelines about fencing if the house you want to buy doesn't already have a fenced yard. Some homeowners associations are very strict about the types of fences they allow, and whether they allow products like Coyote Rollers that help keep pets safer.



## INGREDIENT #2: A PET-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

You'll want to ensure that there's a pedestrian-friendly and pet-friendly walkway in the community before you commit to buying. You may also want to check for nearby parks, and take a few strolls around the neighborhood yourself to make sure there aren't any off-leash or strays that you'll likely encounter when you're out with your four-legged family member.



## INGREDIENT #3: DURABLE, SAFE FLOORING AND STAIRS

Pets have a tough time gaining traction on wood and tile floors - and that can be dangerous (in addition to being uncomfortable and frustrating). Carpet, bamboo, textured vinyl, cork and other materials are better for dogs than smooth hardwoods and tile are; if you're not a rug person, you may want to choose a house with floors your pet can easily navigate. Stairs are important, too, particularly in families with senior pets and breeds that are prone to joint problems; you may have to invest in stair runners and night lights to help keep your pet safe.

## INGREDIENT #4: A PET-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

A good, pet-friendly home has room to play indoors as well as outdoors. It also has a “decompression zone” that your animals can use when they want to escape, rest or relax - a space that’s all their own where they can get away (just like your bedroom is for you).



## INGREDIENT #5: PROXIMITY TO HEALTHCARE

Emergencies happen, and you need to be close by an animal hospital with a veterinarian you trust. Many vets are happy to do familiarization visits when you move to a new area, so call around or talk to your REALTOR® about the best in the area.



# THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO MOVING WITH A DOG

Moving is stressful - for you and your dog. So how do you get from Point A to Point B without traumatizing your pet?

There are several things you can do to simplify the moving process, including:

1. Double-check microchips and ID tags
2. Try to stick to your routine
3. Go for walks in the new neighborhood
4. Try some brain training
5. Give your pup some extra exercise
6. Dedicate a safe space for your pooch
7. Hire a dog sitter on moving day
8. Take a long walk before you go inside the new house
9. Let your dog explore the new space on his or her own

# TIP #1: DOUBLE-CHECK MICROCHIPS AND ID TAGS

Before you move, have your dog's microchip scanned at the vet - you might be surprised to learn that microchips can migrate to a different spot. You'll also want to ensure your new address is associated with your dog's chip, and that you pick up a new set of dog tags that feature your new address. If you have a land line phone number on your dog's tags, now's the time to switch it to your cell.

**Pro Tip:** Leave the old and new dog tags on your dog's collar for moving day.



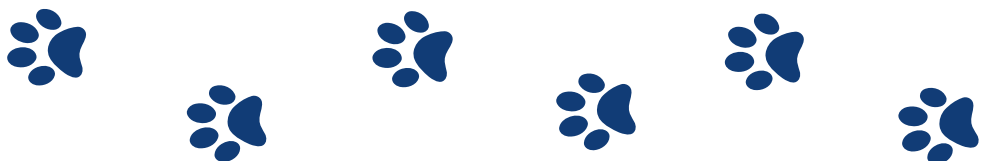
## TIP #2: TRY TO STICK TO YOUR ROUTINE

Most dogs thrive on routine, so stick as close as possible to the one you've already established. Don't skip walks because you're pressed for time - your dog might become stressed out, especially if you're feeling the pinch. (And remember, those walks are good for you, too.)



## TIP #3: GO FOR WALKS IN YOUR NEW NEIGHBORHOOD

When you have time, take your dog for a stroll or two around your new neighborhood. Let her become familiar with the new sights, sounds and smells - that can help minimize your dog's anxiety once you've already moved into your new home.



## TIP #4: TRY BRAIN TRAINING

Keep your dog's brain occupied with challenging puzzle toys in the days leading up to moving day. A little mental enrichment is a great stress-buster for dogs, and it helps them check negative impulses that come naturally with anxiety. Tricky treat balls and Kong toys are great ways to get his brain going.



## TIP #5: GIVE YOUR PUP EXTRA EXERCISE

When you're stressed, your dog feels it - but dogs can't talk it out like we can. That means extra exercise is in order, so whether you take another lap around the block or you throw the ball for an additional five minutes, you can help your dog keep his cool throughout the process. Remember, a tired dog is a happy dog, but check with your vet before adding more exercise if your pooch has a hard time getting around.



## TIP #6: DEDICATE A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUR POOCH

Set up a safe space in your current home - a place your dog can go to escape when she wants to be alone. Whether it's her crate, your bedroom or another special spot, it's your job to make sure your dog has somewhere safe to be.

## TIP #7: HIRE A DOG SITTER

The best way to keep your dog safe on moving day is to hire a sitter. If that's out of the question, you can move all the furniture and boxes out of one room, add your dog's bed, food, water and toys, then close and lock the door - that way, he won't slip out when the front door is open and movers are walking in and out.



## TIP #8: TAKE A LONG WALK BEFORE YOU GO INSIDE

When you arrive at your new home, let your dog take you on a long walk before you go in. You'll take a nice stroll together and end it inside your new home - and your dog will be calm and relaxed when she goes in to explore.



## TIP #9: LET YOUR DOG EXPLORE

Some people prefer to let their pets explore a new home one room at a time; they'll close off doors and only open a new space when the dog is comfortable with the last space. Others prefer to walk through the home with their dogs on a leash, letting the pups explore room by room. You know your dog best, so let him do what works for him. The key is letting him check things out when he's ready, rather than when you want him to.



## SHOULD YOU HIRE A DOG SHIPPER?

First things first: You should never hire anyone to care for your dog if you haven't thoroughly vetted (pun intended) their services. Not all pet shippers are created equal - and some are downright unscrupulous. If you know someone who has moved a dog cross-country and successfully used a pet shipping service, ask them for a recommendation; otherwise, it's going to be up to you to do your homework.

You should also know that most airlines make accommodations for pets, though they often have seasonal restrictions that keep dogs and cats safe when pets are flying in cargo (pets that fit in specific carriers may often be brought in-cabin).

For example, airlines have heat embargoes that prevent them from shipping pets during the hotter months of the year. The heat embargoes are there to protect your pets from heat injuries - not in the cargo hold of the plane, which is climate-controlled, but during periods of time where a plane is grounded or the pet's crate may be on the tarmac waiting to be loaded on the plane.

In addition to airlines making accommodations for pets, trains often allow pets up to a certain weight.



# WHAT DOES A PET SHIPPER DO?

If you choose to outsource pet shipping, you need to know what a pet shipping service actually does. Generally, their main priority is transporting your dog (or cat, or other pet) from one place to another. Some pet shipping companies arrange to share rides with other pets; in that case, the cost is offset for each pet parent.

You can expect your pet to travel in a kennel or carrier, have access to clean water, take potty and exercise breaks, and receive meals along the way.

Some pet shipping services also offer specialty services, such as obtaining the appropriate USDA certifications for your pet to move from one state to another (for states that require them).



## WHY WOULD SOMEONE USE A SHIPPER?

If it's just not feasible for you to move your pet yourself, or if doing so would create an undue hardship on you or your pet, you may want to use a pet shipping service. However, you always do so at your own - and possibly at your pet's - risk.

# WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A PET SHIPPING COMPANY

It's incredibly important that you do plenty of research before trusting a pet shipping company with your fur baby. You should make sure that the company you choose:

- Has a USDA certification for pet shipping
- Has excellent reviews and isn't afraid to give you references
- Is willing to answer the phone when you call, respond to your emails and answer your texts
- Doesn't advertise on sites like Craigslist or Facebook
- Works only with drivers who are highly qualified and have undergone background checks and drug testing



## WHAT ABOUT PET NANNIES?

There's another alternative to hiring a pet shipping company: You can hire a pet nanny to help transport your four-legged family member with you when you move. Your pet nanny will escort your dog by air (that means flying with them and hand-delivering them to you at the airport) to your new location. If this is an option you're considering, let your real estate agent know - your REALTOR most likely knows someone or can put you in touch with the right people to facilitate the flight.



# 5 TIPS TO HELP YOUR DOG ADJUST TO YOUR NEW HOME

Moving into a new space is stressful - not just for you, but for your four-legged family members, too. Although there isn't much you can do about your dog's natural response to change, there are things you can do to help your pet start feeling comfortable in your new space. Check out these five tips to help your dog adjust to your new home:

1. Set up some personal space
2. Go back to your normal routine as soon as you can
3. Let your dog explore on his or her own
4. Keep familiar items handy
5. Be patient and understanding

## TIP #1: SET UP PERSONAL SPACE

Make sure your dog has plenty of room to be alone, if that's what he wants. Try to recreate your pooch's favorite spot in your old home by including a familiar rug, blanket and toys. And most importantly, let your dog choose whether he wants to interact with you or his space - sometimes, he may just want to be alone.



## TIP #2: GET ON A ROUTINE

Dogs thrive on routine, so get back to what you usually do as soon as you can. Make feeding times, walk time and playtime consistent so she can get back into the swing of things. If your dog always takes an evening stroll with you, plays tug-of-war before breakfast, or naps in front of the window every afternoon, try to get her back on her regular schedule; that can help put her mind at ease.



## TIP #3: LET YOUR DOG EXPLORE

Let your dog choose which rooms to explore and when. Some dogs will tear through the house, sniffing every corner - and others will be more wary. Either way (or something in-between) is fine, as long as you let your dog decide how and when to explore. With that said, you should limit your dog's exploration to a few rooms at first, just to prevent him from becoming overwhelmed.



## TIP #4: KEEP FAMILIAR ITEMS HANDY

Putting familiar items - like your furniture - into your new home will help your dog adjust. (You may want to hold off on getting a new sofa, or whatever piece of furniture your dog loves, for now.) Try to put your furnishings in a similar set-up to what you had in your previous house; that can also help your dog find familiarity and become more comfortable.



## TIP #5: BE PATIENT AND UNDERSTANDING

Moving is stressful, and different dogs handle stress in different ways. One thing's for sure, though: If you have a green light from your vet, try to get your dog a little extra exercise in the days and weeks immediately following your move. Exercise is a natural stress-buster for dogs.

Remember, you couldn't explain the move ahead of time, so all your pooch knows is that things have changed. With your patience and understanding, she'll be back to her old, stress-free self in no time.



# HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT VET IN BOCA RATON

Finding the right veterinarian is probably at the top of your To-Do list if you're moving to Boca Raton. You can start your search now to save time later - but where do you begin?

For most people, the best thing to do is make in-person visits to veterinarians around the area. Ideally, you'll find one who shares your philosophy on pet care, and you'll be able to see the vet and staff members deal with other pets. These steps can get you on the right track:

1. Get recommendations from people you know
2. Visit vets' offices with or without your pet
3. Talk to the vet about specific issues
4. Ask the front desk staff about fees
5. Check each vet's professional accreditations



# TIP #1: GET RECOMMENDATIONS

The best way to find a good vet is to ask people you know. You can ask friends and family in the area or your pet-friendly Boca Raton REALTOR® (she happens to know a thing or two about the vets in the area). If all else fails, take to Google. People tend to be brutally honest in their online reviews, so start reading to zero in on vets that may be a good fit for you.



# TIP #2: VISIT VETS' OFFICES

After you've narrowed your choices down to just a few, visit the vets' offices on your list. You can go with or without your pet - it's up to you - but you definitely want to see the office in person. Go into the lobby to check how clean it is, how the front desk staff looks (do they hate their jobs and want to leave? Are they happy and friendly, greeting you when you come in the door), and how it smells. Is there a comfortable waiting area, and is it packed with patients? The vibe in the front usually matches the vibe in the back, so if you don't get a good impression, leave and head to the next clinic on your list.

## TIP #3: TALK TO EACH VET

Take some time to talk to each veterinarian about how he or she deals with specific issues, even if they don't affect your pet. You'll want to talk about things like preventive care, cancer treatments, how they support senior dogs and whether they provide things like:

- In-house digital X-rays
- Lab work
- Ultrasounds
- Radiology
- Veterinary surgical services



## TIP #4: FIND OUT ABOUT FEES

Compare what each veterinary clinic tells you about fees, costs of common procedures, and what methods of payment they accept. If you have pet insurance, ask whether the office accepts it. You should also ask whether the vet provides written estimates for procedures and services, whether they accept payment plans, and whether you'll get a detailed description of services after each visit.

## TIP #5: CHECK EACH VET'S PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATIONS

Find out how many veterinarians and licensed vet techs that the clinic has on staff. See how long they've been practicing and where they studied, as well as whether they're members of the American Veterinary Medical Association.



# LIST OF VETERINARIANS IN BOCA RATON

Here's a quick list of vets in Boca Raton that you can check out. We're not endorsing any of them, but we're happy to provide you with their contact information so you can make the right choice for your pet.

Boca Midtowne Animal Hospital  562-342-5489	Boca Palms Animal Hospital  561-395-4030	Boca Veterinary Clinic  561-923-0600
Boca Village Animal Hospital  561-391-2266	Central Animal Hospital  561-391-8787	Compassionate Care Animal Hospital  561-416-9704
Healthy Pets Veterinary Care  561-994-7656	Mizner Park Veterinary Clinic  561-391-3203	Regency Veterinary Clinic  561-999-5551
TLC Animal Hospital  561-997-8090	VCA Spanish River Animal Hospital  561-368-0583	Vets to Pets Mobile Housecalls  561-376-6568





# 5 GREAT PLACES TO TAKE YOUR DOG THIS WEEKEND IN BOCA RATON

Explore these popular Boca Raton hotspots with your four-legged family member this weekend:

1. The dog-friendly beach at Spanish River Park
2. Canine Cove at South County Regional Park
3. Mizner Bark Park
4. Boca Breakfast & Lunch Club
5. Dubliner Irish Pub

# SPANISH RIVER PARK'S DOG-FRIENDLY BEACH

The Bark Beach at Spanish River Park is a great place to take your pooch to splash and play. Dogs are allowed off-leash in the designated dog beach area, but no digging allowed - so spend time in the water instead. You can get a membership (\$31 per dog) or a weekend pass (\$11 per dog).



# CANINE COVE AT SOUTH COUNTY REGIONAL PARK

Canine Cove has two large dog sections, a medium dog section and a small dog section, making it easy for your pup to make like-sized new friends. You can sit on a shaded bench or under a gazebo while your dog plays to his or her heart's content. They even have dog drinking fountains and a pet washing station (just in case).



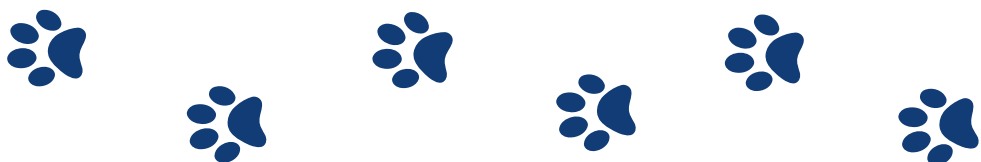
## MIZNER BARK PARK

At 6 acres, the Mizner Bark Park on Banyan Trail is big enough for your pooch to run, romp and play all day. There are three separate areas for small, medium and large dogs, and doggie bags and fresh water are always available.



## BOCA BREAKFAST & LUNCH CLUB

Before you head to the beach or the park, stop for a quick bite at the Boca Breakfast and Lunch Club. Located at 171 Southeast Mizner Boulevard (561-430-5293), they love having pups on the outdoor patio. You may even find a few menu items that are perfect for your four-legged family member.



## DUBLINER IRISH PUB

Treat your pup to dinner on the patio at the Dubliner Irish Pub after a long day of fun in the sun. Located at 435 Plaza Real (561-620-2540), your dog is always welcome in the outdoor seating area.



A seasoned REALTOR® who grew up in New York, Elyse is also a retired Court Reporter. She currently resides in Delray Beach, FL with her husband and two dogs.

Since moving to Boca Raton 28 years ago, Elyse and her husband (and their dogs, of course!) have owned five homes; two in Boca Raton, two in Delray Beach and one in Boynton Beach.

It was through her love of real estate, the law and her dogs that she found her passion helping others find pet-friendly homes in Boca Raton and the surrounding areas, for both dogs and cats.

When a condo turned them down that was pet friendly to dogs up to 60 pounds, but refused to allow her 2 furkids weighing a whopping total of 16 pounds, that was it. She was hooked. Elyse could not see the logic in this at all. By running into walls and rules that made no sense, she made it her mission to help others.

Of course, she also works with people who have NO pets! Absolutely!

# ARE YOU LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT PLACE TO LIVE IN BOCA RATON?

We're always here to help. Call 561-716-7824 now to talk to Elyse about what you need.

You can also email [Elyse@ElyseBerman.com](mailto:Elyse@ElyseBerman.com) or visit our website at [BuySellHomesBocaRaton.com](http://BuySellHomesBocaRaton.com).

