

End-of-life Preplanning Guide

Preparing for the loss of a pet can be an emotionally challenging experience. Planning ahead allows you to make thoughtful decisions and create meaningful final moments together. **Please use this as a guide for your pet's end-of-life journey.**

1 | Prioritize quality time with your pet

Make a bucket list. Enjoying activities with your pet can help you cherish your time together—visit a favourite park, offer special food or treats, go on a road trip, or snuggle in bed.

Create lasting keepsakes. Build positive memories by documenting your pet's unique personality—do a photo shoot, record a video or your pet's bark or meow.

2 | Plan a peaceful euthanasia

Think about what you want your pet's final moments to look like.

Where will it take place?

- Vet clinic; a safe room offering privacy
- At home with a mobile vet; often preferred to reduce anxiety in your pet's final moments
- Favourite place; consider a meaningful spot at home or outdoors

Who should be present?

- Family and friends: _____
- Children; giving children the opportunity to be present is encouraged
- Other pets; recommended for pets that are bonded with the patient

What if your pet passes at home?

- Bring your pet to the vet clinic for aftercare arrangements
- Contact a mobile vet service to pick them up
- Home burial (please check local by-laws)

Natural passing

While many owners hope for a peaceful natural passing, animals often experience significant discomfort in their final moments. Consulting a hospice veterinarian to develop a care plan can help keep your pet as comfortable as possible.

3 | Aftercare arrangements

Exploring aftercare options in advance will help you make the best choices for you and your family.

- Aquamation** (water cremation); warm water and salt reduce the body to ash; an environmentally-friendly alternative to traditional cremation
- Cremation**; flame-based heat reduces the body to bone, which is processed to become ash
- Home burial (please check your local by-laws)

Options for cremation or aquamation:

- Private; your pet's ashes returned in an urn
- Communal; ashes are not returned

Special items

Consider including organic items such as flowers, treats, or a letter to be cremated or aquamated with your pet.

4 | Memorialization

Creating a lasting tribute can help honour your pet's memory and aid in the grieving process.

- Clay or ink paw and/or nose print
- Fur or whisker clipping
- Memorial jewelry
- Viewing and visitation; arrange a memorial ceremony with the crematorium or aquamation facility



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