

## Finding a Cat-Friendly Rental Home

**CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional cat sitter, offers tips for finding a rental that will welcome both you and your pets.**

*By Jeanne Adlon*

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**Q:** What is the best way to find a rental home that is pet-friendly?

**A:** That reminds me of one house call I would not want to repeat. I was asked to care for two cats, Emanuel and Bunky, at a third-floor walkup. As usual, I went to meet their owners to go over feeding instructions while they would be away, and was informed that the owner of the apartment building lived on the ground floor and didn't allow pets! This was an old brownstone that had never been renovated and to make matters worse, the bathroom was down the hall.

I was informed that if the building owner saw me on the property, the "cover story" was that I was watering the plants in their absence — I would have to explain that these plants are pretty thirsty. Worse, I was not to let him into their apartment even in an emergency (It was a studio with no place to hide the kitties). I was very disturbed by this but crossed my fingers and went ahead with the arrangement. Fortunately there were no emergencies and if there had been, I would have made sure all was well no matter what, but I did have to tip-toe up the stairs. Readers, this is not an ideal situation for either you or your pets.

Finding an apartment or rental property that allows pets can be a challenge. Cats are more easily accepted than dogs but you might want to work with a rental agent for your specific needs. I have found that apartment complexes are more likely to allow pets than private homes with apartments. Check with doormen and building superintendents and make sure you ask your friends.

If a rental advertisement says 'No Pets,' call anyway and see if you can negotiate. If the landlord or homeowner says you can have a pet, get it in writing. You may be required to pay an additional deposit so make sure you take pictures of the apartment when you move in. That way you have a record of any previous damage. The bottom line is you need to make sure your kitty is as welcome in a new home as you are.