

On the Move

Cat owners face a challenge when finding a home to rent. Here's how to make your cat attractive to landlords.

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Home is where the heart is and within our homes and hearts live our cats. When we search for a new place to hang our hat, we face the challenge of finding a home that allows our hearts delight, our cats, to be with us. Sometimes, the difficulties people have finding a new home for themselves and their cats seem hopeless, and cats end up not only with a new home, but a new owner as well.

Catherine Hogan, an animal rescuer in Eureka, Mo., is one of hundreds of shelter workers who foster cats when owners can no longer keep them. Hogan said that relocating and can't take the cat tops her list of reasons why people give up their cats.

This is particularly a problem for the elderly, said Luci Koizumi, a columnist who researched this subject for the Reston Observer in Reston, Va. I can't forget the sad case of an elderly woman whose terminally ill husband purchased a condominium for her to move into upon his death. When he died, she found that the building did not accept pets.

Fortunately, Koizumi said, many senior facilities are becoming more aware of the benefit pets have on older residents and are making accommodations.

So, rather than giving up before you start, learn what it takes for you and your furry family to find the perfect home.

How Landlords ThinkThe last thing a landlord wants to face is destruction of their property by renters. Property owners often have a reason to be cautious of prospective tenants who have pets.

Rhonda Wiler, DVM, of Half Moon Bay, Calif., remembers her experience renting a mobile home when she was a veterinary student. The lady before me had pretty much moved out, but left her four cats to fend for themselves, Wiler said. There were cat feces covering every horizontal surface in the kitchen, especially the stove. I had to remove every carpet in the house and paint sealant on the floor. The smell was indescribable.

This is the kind of scenario landlords don't want to ever have to deal with. It is not the animals that are to blame. Circumstances like this one make it hard on everyone in the housing market.