

Pet Sitting for Birds

Here are some quick tips to help you and your birds when you have to leave town.

By Melissa Kauffman

Who can pet sit your bird(s):

1. A friend, family member or co-worker

- a. If this person pet sits at his or her own house, make sure the house is bird safe. The bird should be kept away from all of the pets and small children.
- b. I suggest paying the person, even if it is a small amount, or trading pet sitting services. This makes it less of a favor and more of a service.
- c. The best situation would be for the person to come to your house and interact with the bird for an hour in the morning and evening, or even better, to house sit.

2. A professional pet sitter

- a. There are two national professional pet sitting organizations: Pet Sitters International and the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters. You can find a local pet sitter from their directories.
- b. You want to make sure the pet sitter is familiar with pet birds, is bonded and insured and provides references.
- c. The pet sitter should come to your house before the first time he or she pet sits for you. He or she should be professional, comfortable with the pets and courteous to you. I personally like the pet sitters who show a true interest in my birds and a passion for animals.
- d. The pet sitter should have you fill out some forms with emergency contact numbers, pet likes and dislikes, medical conditions, basic care, etc.
- e. You should be able to call your pet sitter to check in on your pets.

3. Board your bird

- a. You will want to board your bird at a trustworthy place, such as an avian only store or avian vet. A place or person who is familiar and comfortable with birds.
- b. Your bird, plus all other birds boarded, should have a health check from an avian vet prior to boarding. You don't want to expose your bird to other avian diseases.

The Information To Give To Your Pet Sitter

1. The name and description of pets (if there are more than one).
2. The contact information of where you will be.
3. Emergency contact person – a family member or close friends familiar with the pets.
4. Vet contact information, plus an amount that can be spent at the vet in case of an emergency.
5. All feeding instructions.
6. Change of water instructions.
7. Likes and dislikes of birds and any quirks of their personalities.

8. A long perch to use for Step-ups and Step-downs. (Pet birds don't always respond to strangers well.)

9. An agreed upon time for you to contact the pet sitter to let him or her know you've returned. If you haven't called, the pet sitter will attempt to contact you and then contact the emergency person, so that arrangements for continued care can take place in your absence.