

Before You Leave: Checklist for House Sitters

Congratulations on securing a house-sitting assignment! Use this checklist as a guide to ensure you're fully prepared for your new role.

1. Complete the House Sitting Agreement

Ensure that both parties sign a clear, detailed house-sitting agreement. This document should outline expectations, responsibilities, and any amendments specific to your arrangement.

2. Request an Information Pack

Ask the homeowner for a pack containing essential details to help you care for their home and pets effectively. Suggested items include:

- **Contact Information:** Details for regular updates and emergency contacts.
 - **Visitors Policy:** Guidelines on visitors allowed during your stay.
 - **Rules and Regulations:** Include community, rental, or property-specific rules.
 - **Restricted Areas:** Clarify any rooms or items that are off-limits.
 - **Insurance Details:** Ensure you're informed about home and contents coverage.
 - **Service Providers:** Obtain schedules for maintenance, gardeners, or other service providers and clarify your responsibilities regarding access.
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3. Pet Care Preparations / Arrangement

Ensure the homeowner provides comprehensive instructions for pet care, covering feeding, grooming, medical needs, and routines. Make sure you can locate any dog leads etc and get contact details for the local Vet service.

4. Travel Preparations

- **Email Setup:** Use a portable email service for correspondence.
 - **Timely:** Make sure you arrive to your destination on time and don't leave the owner waiting. If you are going to be late, let the owner know in advance.
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5. Home Services

Gain a clear understanding of the following:

- **Waste Collection:** Note collection days and request sufficient rubbish bags.
 - **Recycling:** Learn recycling protocols and available tools.
 - **Subscriptions and Media Access:** Clarify if you can use paid services like magazines, TV, or Wi-Fi, and who will cover the costs.
 - **An Post:** Ask about handling postal mail and if it needs to be forwarded..
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6. Address Your Needs

- Request spare keys and ask about local shops and other local amenities.
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7. Utilities

Understand the homeowner's utility setup and responsibilities:

- **Gas, Oil, Electricity, and Water:** Know how to locate meters, fuse boxes, and emergency shut-offs. Take readings on arrival.
 - **Heating and Cooling Systems:** Request clear instructions for turning on, timer setting and turning off.
 - **Laundry / Dishwater Appliances:** Ask for guidance on using any machines.
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8. Grounds Maintenance

Learn the requirements for:

- Composting, pool care, garden tools, and lawn maintenance.
 - Indoor plant watering and topping up bird feeders.
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9. Security

Ensure you're well-versed in property security, including:

- **Alarm Systems:** Understand how to operate alarms and manage codes.
- **Cameras and Recording Devices:** Discuss any active monitoring systems and agree on their use during your stay.
- **Locks:** Obtain keys for window and door locks as necessary.

This thorough preparation ensures a smooth and enjoyable house-sitting experience for all parties involved.

