



Image via [Pexels](#)

Downsizing: The Pet-Friendly Edition

Downsizing is a smart choice for your finances and your lifestyle in retirement. Yet while downsizing simplifies life for you, it's not as easy for your pets. Dogs and cats are sensitive to change and a big move can upend routines and cause stress for our four-legged companions. That's no reason to delay your downsize, however. For a smooth move for you and your pets, read these relocation tips from [Earl Anderson Realtor](#).

Choose a pet-friendly home and neighborhood

Downsized dwellings can be just as pet-friendly as larger homes. The key is paying attention to pet-friendly features like fenced yards, durable flooring, and access to walking trails, parks, and dog parks. Ask [your Odessa Realtor](#) about the best pet-friendly neighborhoods and inquire about breed restrictions and other requirements before buying in an HOA community.

Other features for pet owners include back doors that lead directly into a fenced yard and entryway storage. A mudroom with shelves, hooks, and an interior door is the [ideal space](#) to store pet supplies and clean dirty paws before dogs track messes indoors. It's also the perfect answer for where to put a litter box in small spaces. You can install a cat door into the mudroom and use a bench with storage to hide your cat's litter box. If you [buy a cat door](#) with a paintable frame, you can even match it to your home's décor.

Reduce pets' moving stress

Moving is a big adjustment for pets, especially if downsizing to a smaller home will change your pet's routine. Start shifting your pet's routine prior to moving to minimize stress after you arrive in the new home. For example, if you're moving from a house with a backyard into an apartment or condo, gradually reduce unsupervised time outdoors until your pet is only going outside on a leash with you.

You'll also want to get your pet comfortable with its crate and car rides before embarking on a move. Start slowly, keep the mood relaxed, and give your pet plenty of treats for encouragement. The [goal](#) is for your pet to associate its crate and car rides with good things, not anxiety.

Make moving day arrangements

Keep pets away from the action on moving day to minimize stress. It's recommended to hire a pet sitter or kennel your pet while movers are working.

On the road, use apps like GoPetFriendly and BringFido to locate pet-friendly hotels, restaurants, and rest areas along your route. Make sure your pet's microchip is updated with current contact information and always leash or kennel pets before opening car doors.

Flying to your destination? Fly pets in [the cabin](#) with you whenever possible and avoid flying with short-nosed dogs and cats as they're at risk of breathing problems. Know that airlines may require a specific type of carrier or health and immunization requirements before allowing pets to fly.

Enrich pets' environment

Your pet may need more exercise and stimulation in a smaller home with less to do and explore. Consider hiring a dog walker to ensure your pet gets enough exercise. [Word-of-mouth](#) is the best way to find a dog walker, so ask your neighbors who they use or use websites like Rover and Wag to hire a dog walker online.

There are also things you can do to make [indoor environments](#) more enriching for cats like using puzzle feeders, providing a variety of toys and scratching posts, and building perches with a view.

With the right planning and preparation, downsizing can be a great experience for you *and* your pets. Even in a downsized home, it's possible to find pet-friendly features that make everyday life convenient for pet owners and provide the enrichment pets need to stay happy and healthy.

Are you looking for a pet-friendly home in Odessa, Midland, and the surrounding area? Contact [Earl Anderson](#), your professional Realtor for help finding your next home.