



# Tips For Placing A Homeless Animal

## Temporary Shelter...

This can be your own home, a foster home, a boarding facility, or your vet.

If it's in your home or a foster home, it's a good idea to have a crate when you first introduce a new animal. Even a "house-broken" animal has accidents sometimes in new surroundings. And a crate helps keep the new pet separate from the regular animal family members until everyone gets acquainted. The first 24 hours can be tense, so be watchful. There might be a spat, which you'll need to arbitrate. Be careful about feeding together. Common sense and loving patience will guide you.

## Health Care...

This is the hardest. Some people don't take a stray to the vet at all, others go right away. It probably depends upon your personal resources and the animal's condition. Regardless of your approach, it is imperative that you ensure that the animal will be neutered/spayed. When you adopt the animal out to a new owner, the adoption contract must have a clause that compels the owner to get (and keep) the animal vaccinated and have the animal "fixed". It should have another clause that allows you to follow up and allows you to re-claim the animal in the event of non-compliance.

## Finding A Home...

Word of mouth is great, but the quickest way is an ad. A short ad costs about \$10 for the week and a generously long one \$20-\$30.

The "lead line" of the ad should be in bold and a "grabber", such as... **"DOG NEEDS SECOND CHANCE"** or **"CAT ABANDONED - NEEDS LOVING HOME"**. It is my belief that if you're trying to find a home for a MIXED-BREED dog, the first word should be "dog" and the same applies for a cat. If you have a specific breed, that should be your first word... **"DALMATION RESCUED NEEDS HOME"**. The ad should include age (if you know

it), size, and breed. Be specific about the family you're seeking. Kids? No kids? No "small" children"? Include the animals' characteristics...energetic, good with cats, good with dogs, good with children, should be only animal, etc. At the end, I always put " \$XX fee and contract required".

By about Day #3 of the ad, calls will start coming in. Some will sound good. Some will sound crazy. You can do some elimination on the phone with the following questions... Will the animal be kept inside or outside? Do you have a fenced yard? If you rent, does your landlord allow pets? Have you had other pets? Tell me about them. Etc., etc., etc.

After the phone screening, you may either fax/e-mail them an application and get it back BEFORE they come to see the dog; or you can invite them to come to see the animal and give them an application at that time. Regardless, I NEVER let someone have a dog until I AT LEAST check their references on the application, so they do not leave with the dog on that visit. In addition to the application and reference check, I also go to their home for a "home visit". You may take the animal or not. If you DO take the animal, BE SURE to take the adoption contract.

If you're worried about being unkind to someone by telling them their home as unsuitable, don't even let them KNOW you might leave the animal there on the visit. Tell them you're bringing the animal to see how the animal does in the home. Then, if you think the home is unsuitable, you just leave WITH the animal and they think that's your normal procedure. You call them back later and tell them whatever you must about deciding against them.

## Follow Up...

Assuming that you've done all this and you've placed the animal in what you hope is the best home, DO THE FOLLOW UP. Call them the next day and see how it's going. I also try to call them a week or so later and then in about a month, to make sure all is well.

*Visit our website for applications and contracts that you can download and use! [www.ARTanimals.org](http://www.ARTanimals.org)*