

HOME OWNERS' TOP 5 TIPS FINDING YOUR HOUSE SITTER

House sitting can be a very rewarding experience. But if you're missing critical knowledge, it can be a struggle.

The first step to house sitting success hinges on your choice of house sitting platform. But if you don't know the qualities to look for, choosing a site from among the plethora of platforms can be daunting – especially if you're a first timer. Our [side-by-side comparison](#) of house sitting websites will help you compare, review and self-select the one best for you. Then follow our **TOP 5 TIPS** – and find your perfect house sitter :)

TIP 1: Register with a good House Sitting Website

In order to connect with House Sitters, Home Owners must first register with a house sitting website. The profile of house sitters is on public view, but contact is restricted to registered home owners. Registration is free for Home Owners on most sites.

Insider Tip: It is not necessary to register on more than one house sitting website - every good site has hundreds of house sitters to choose from. The exception is if you think your house sit is going to be difficult to fill i.e. you may be in a remote location *and/or* your house sitter will need a FWD *and/or* your pets have behavioral issues.

TIP 2: How to find your perfect house sitter

Home Owners can connect with House Sitters in two ways. First, place your advertisement. Then:

EITHER....watch the email applications roll in via the sites' internal messaging system. You will most likely receive applications within a few hours, particularly if your 'sit' is in a sought after destination *and/or* is for a long period of time. Once satisfied you have a good selection, you might want to suspend your ad. If later you want more applications, simply re-activate your ad.

OR.....search registered house sitters and contact them direct. Each house sitting website has different search 'functions'. The most common are:-

- ✓ Available Dates / Booking Calendar
- ✓ Preferred location/s
- ✓ Pet preferences
- ✓ Duration e.g. a week or two, 2 months.

Insider Tip: Six to eight weeks is the optimum period of time to start searching for a house and pet sitter. Longer than that, and the home owner risks their selected house sitter having to pull out closer the time. No matter how honorable and committed, the longer the intervening period the more likely it is people's circumstances will change.

TIP 3: The Home Owner Ad

It is very important to give prospective house sitters as much information as possible. Short, vague ads mean you end up wasting time sorting through unsuitable applications. The more information you give, the easier it is for potential house sitters/s to rule themselves out, saving you (and them) time. House sitters need to know are:-

<i>Type of home and location</i>	inner city apartment, suburban home, remote farm.
<i>Sitter's accommodation</i>	main bedroom, separate cottage, their van.
<i>Pets</i>	dogs, cats, fish, horses, chooks, guinea pigs.
<i>House sitting jobs</i>	Responsibilities in and around the home e.g. potted plants, pool, lawns, hedges, edges, garden. Time dedicated to pets e.g. walk dog around the block AM and PM OR our elderly dog with arthritis does not need to be walked.
<i>Your expectations</i>	"I'm fastidious around the home and am seeking someone of like ilk" OR "I simply want my fur family fed & loved."

Insider Tip: Your listing is your responsibility! Bad experiences can happen when house sitters discover the house is not as described or the access road will wreck their car's suspension or the pets have issues that weren't mentioned. By being thorough, open and honest you'll be setting yourself up for a happy house sitting experience.

TIP 4: Short listing house sitters

Allocate time to dealing with the first influx of enquiries. Don't post your house sitting ad then wait a couple of days to check the response. To do so will leave you open to being inundated with applications and create unnecessary work as you must reply to each. It should not take long to quickly select three or four candidates who meet most, perhaps all, of your requirements. Trust your intuition! Pick people you feel good about - the application was polite & friendly and their Profile engenders confidence.

Insider Tip: House sitters often apply for multiple house sitting jobs simultaneously because they have no guarantee they will secure any particular one. It's therefore wise to contact your preferred sitter/s ASAP and get the wheels in motion. The best house sitters tend to get snapped up, quickly.

TIP 5: Interviewing your potential house sitter

It's very important to 'interview' your house sitter, as talking enables each party to get a sense of how good a 'fit' they are for each other. If possible meet in person, then your pets can also assess the suitability of their prospective minder. If face to face is not doable, the next best method is Skype, failing which a phone conversation will do.

Insider Tip: Don't rely on electronic communication to select your house sitter. Try and speak. Talking conveys so much more than tapping.